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SAN FRANCISCO

SIGHTS

IN THE

GOLD REGION,

AND

SCENES BY THE WAY.

BY

THEODORE T. JOHNSON.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Hope with a goodly prospect feeds the eye;
Shows from a rising ground possession nigh;
Shortens the distance or o'erlooks it quite;
So easy 'tis to travel with the sight."—DRYDEN.

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HIS OLD FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES

OF

"THE ECLECTIC,"

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

MAY 5, 1938

PREFACE.

THE flattering approbation already bestowed upon this work, and the consequent speedy exhaustion of the first edition, have induced the enterprising Publishers to stereotype and re-issue it, in an enlarged and improved form.

In the original preparation of the work, I endeavored in as faithful and graphic a manner as possible, to present to its readers *exactly what the title imports*, and to furnish them likewise, with the benefit of the *actual experience*, of several of the *oldest settlers and diggers* in California and the Gold Region; adducing to their reliable and valuable testimony, my own experience and careful observation.

In the accomplishment of this, it has been my aim to acquire the confidence of the Public in the truth of my narrative, rather than immediate profit or applause.

I confess my inability to coincide with the large number of respectable and talented writers, who transfer the Paradise of ie Euphrates to the borders of the Sacramento, and the perpetual bloom of Arcadia to the shores of the Pacific: nevertheless, I find emphatic confirmation of my views, in the "Nar-

*A B S
MAY 5, 1938

rative of the United States Exploring Expedition," by Capt. Charles Wilkes, U. S. N., as well as from other authorities quoted. Impartiality and usefulness, entertainment and instruction, are the elements which I have striven to combine.

In furtherance of this, I have added to the present edition *eight new chapters*, comprising suggestions to travellers by the Isthmus Route, for the *dry and rainy season*, the latest intelligence from California and the Gold Region, (from numerous authentic sources,) together with new and interesting information in relation to Oregon, kindly communicated to me by Hon. Samuel R. Thurston, M. C. for that Territory.

I have also been so fortunate as to obtain engravings, from several of the *original sketches* taken in California by J. Pendergrast, Esq., (well known and esteemed there as an amateur artist of the highest attainments,) and a Map of the Gold Region, from the Government Survey by Commodore Jones, received through Henry D. Cook, Esq., of San Francisco.

With the value of the work thus increased, I trust it is not presumptuous to expect the continued favor of the reading public.

T. T. J.

PHILADELPHIA, April, 1850.

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CHAPTER I.

Introduction—Embarkation—Incidents of the Voyage—Arrival at Chagres.

"THE latitude of Richmond and climate of Italy"—the gold of Ophir—the silver, red wood, and cedar of Solomon's temple—the lovely valley of the Sacramento—the vineyards of France, indigo of Hindostan, and wheat of America; and more magnificent still, the placers of golden rocks in the mountains, and rivers of gold in the valleys, who, who would not go to California? and echo answered, who? For not a ticket could be had in the Pacific steamers—not a Berks' washer, Colt's or Allen's revolver, spade, pick, shovel, tin-pan, or India-rubber outfit, but by contract, premium, or transfer.

Yes, the *yellow* fever was upon us; and in company with thousands of our go-ahead countrymen, we were off to the El-Dorado of the Pacific, sure we were right, because we had a colonel's and governor's report in our pockets. Provided, through the influence of a kind friend, with a transferred ticket for the steamer on the Pacific, I embarked, on the 5th of February, in the steam-ship "Crescent City," Capt Charles Stoddard, from New York, for Chagres. The thick-falling snow and sposhy wharf dampened not our ardor; but we only longed the more to be away from these inhospitable

shores, where only common potatoes and similar product grew, and where gold could only be had in the shape of alloyed coin; to the delightful region where the products of tropical and temperate zones outvied each other in the same genial soil, and where gold (except the two massive lumps) had to be removed from under the coulter of the industrious plough man.

Thus the fever raged; and there seemed to be no remedy but a change of air, climate, and diet. The scene of our departure presented a spectacle ludicrous, animated, and extraordinary. The decks of our steamer were crowded to suffocation with departing adventurers and their friends—our ribs were in danger of fracture from pressure of the crowd—our shins from contusion against the gold machines, forcing pumps, crowbars, shovels, axes, picks, pocket-pistols, and pickpockets, and our lungs of collapse from returning the excited cheers of the multitude. The wharves and shipping, including three other ocean steamers, crowded with a dense throng to witness our departure—the firing of cannon from ship and shore, re-echoed by cheer after cheer—a vigorous snow-ball campaign among the b'hoys, mingled with the waved handkerchiefs of the gentler sex and the unuttered emotions of parting, fixed an abiding record in the volumes of our memories.

As we passed slowly out of the dock, the excitement of the surrounding multitude was manifested by the most enthusiastic shouts, and many seemed ready to leap on board to accompany us to El Dorado. Imbued with a similar spirit and aroused by the glowing anticipations of the future, we commenced our long voyages and journeyings to the promised land, with upwards of three hundred passengers, composing no discreditable specimen of the energy and enterprise of the universal Yankee nation; and clad in all sorts of costumes,

from a Broadway top-coat and cloth cap, to a boatmen's pea jacket and norwester, and from a western hunting shirt and wild cat, to a *bona fide* Mexican blanket and sombrero. Pistols, bowie-knives, rifles and revolvers were slung over our shoulders or stuck in our belts; and the followers of the renowned Don Quixotte might well have claimed us as fellow adventurers, if variety and singularity of equipments as well as self confidence in expected achievements, entitled us to that distinction.

Steaming rapidly down the magnificent bay of New York, we met the long-expected steamer, United States, and welcomed the sea-beat home of the safe voyagers with enthusiastic shouts, which they returned with good will, no doubt congratulating themselves at bidding adieu to the world of waters on which we were soon to be tossed. The clouds which in the morning had filled the air with fast-driving snow, now betook themselves to the upper atmosphere, and soon we dismissed our pilot, charged with numerous farewell letters to our friends and families. Then, with giant arms, our gallant ship dashed on her course; and we turned our eyes for one more adieu to the eastern shores of our native land, conscious, as they disappeared from our strained vision, that the stormy Atlantic and wide Pacific, and our great western continent, with its towering peaks and rolling prairies must soon separate us from the loved thresholds from which we wandered. Few of our adventurers saw the glories of the declining sun on this our first day at sea; for the unrelenting misery of sea-sickness had seized upon most of them. Fortunately, exempt from this infliction, ample opportunity was afforded me for observing the scenes on board, and the magnificence of the surrounding ocean.

The horizon on every side shut in with dark wind clouds,

and the increased rolling and pitching of the ship, betokened a growing sea; and our anticipations of the sublimity of the ocean were thus realized on the following day; for on every side the white-capped waves were curling around our bark of safety in scornful defiance, while her ponderous wheels, with unceasing revolution, clove their steady course through the contending flood—on one side submerged in foam, on the other grasping with vain energy at the rushing waters.

It is not, however, my intention to inflict upon the reader a minute description of the voyage. On the following day we were in the Gulf Stream, and off the famous Cape Hatteras; the ship steaming and driving with all sails set before a stiff norwest wind, which soon changed to the westward, causing a strong and heavy cross sea, and making it necessary for those on deck to hold on, keeping a bright look out to leeward; where a sudden arrival of some poor wight in the scuppers was announced by shouts of laughter from his more fortunate companions. In the cabin below the scene was ludicrous in the extreme; the chairs, settees, sofas, and carpet were strewed with pale, despairing castaways, to whom our polite and attentive stewardess, Mrs. Young, was a mother in gruel, not forgetting the continual gingle which she industriously maintained among tea-cups and spoons, and the fiz-whiz of Seidlitz powders, for which there was a perpetual outcry, or rather a dying moan, from floor and sofa. One poor fellow vowed he would be buried in the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean next day, and no where else, while several engaged their passage home from Chagres.

It was a subject of regret that there were no ladies on board to enliven us with their presence and conversation, and remind us of the home scenes we were so rapidly receding from. Nevertheless, among our large number of passengers,

much order and harmony prevailed, and we could not but remark the general good conduct and character of all on board, representing as they did nearly every State in the Union, and most of the professions, trades, and pursuits of life.

Surely it is an extraordinary spectacle when men of industry, sobriety, talents, and good character at home, are willing to forego for a considerable period all the advantages which they there possess, and venture upon voyages and travels of danger and hardship, of more than six thousand miles, to the west coast of America, for the acquisition of gold as miners or traders only. Men of this class have gone out to California, with the confident expectation of accumulating rapidly abundant means to liquidate honorably just claims upon some, and all with the hope of providing comfortable independence for themselves and families. And to them will be accorded all the commendation due to an enterprise unparalleled on so large a scale, in the history of the world.

In a few days we welcomed the balmy air of the South, and our invalid passengers, availing themselves of the smooth sea, thronged the deck,—some with books, some with amusements, all enjoying the scene according to their inclination.

We spent the lovely moonlight evenings with songs and chorus, or in listening to the flute and violin. When our national airs were played, enthusiastic cheers resounded through the ship; the Marseilles hymn elicited three cheers for the French republic; and when finally our gentlemanly and jolly captain performed a sailor hornpipe in first rate style, nine cheers roared around the decks and up the shrouds, till the ship almost danced in chorus.

Though we were out of the regular track of coasting vessels we passed several sail, and spoke, second day out, a beautiful

brig going right before the wind, with studdin' sails alow and aloft. She presented a most animated and beautiful appearance, rising gracefully to every wave like a swan, her snowy wings just opened to the breeze; we exchanged cheers with her passengers, and requested them to report us all well.

On the afternoon of February 10th, our fifth day out, we hove in sight of the Caycos Islands, a part of the Bahama group, covered with a range of low, undulating hills. The land was greeted by all as a pleasant sight, the first that met our view since the highlands of Navesink. This afternoon the awnings on deck shaded a merry and pleasant crowd; and all remarked the good feeling, order and sobriety, which universally prevailed on board. The call for gruel was over, and all betook themselves to knife and fork with a will, at which we few old salts congratulated them.

Again we beheld with admiration the gorgeous hues of the evening sky, and one by one the stars shone out, the heavenly host led on by Venus, now the evening star, whose effulgence in the tropics is so vastly superior to that in the North, as to cast its beams across the ocean in miniature rivalry with the bright queen of night.

Soon she rose and cast the light of her full orb upon the sea and ship, and this night she was indeed to us a messenger of mercy, for in half an hour after her rising, the engine was suddenly stopped, and the cry of breakers ahead passed with electric rapidity from stem to stern. Going forward, we beheld with awe the surf and white beach of a small island on both bows; the ship seeming to be in a little cove within a mile of the shore, and going stem on, ten knots an hour. The island proved to be Little Iñagua, uninhabited except by turtle, and our escape from wreck was most providential, as most of the Bahamas have coral reef extending far into the sea. The

look out man in the fore top had gone to sleep, the first mate, who was officer of the deck, had failed to see the danger, and a sailor off duty first gave the alarm.

The following day we saw the granite-bound shores and cloud-capt hills of San Domingo, and soon after, on our starboard bow clearly traced the lesser heights of the east end of Cuba; thus having in sight at the same time the two greatest and most perverted island paradises of the West Indies.

This day was our first Sunday upon the ocean, and nearly all attended divine service conducted by the Rev. Albert Williams, of the Presbyterian denomination, concluding with the beautiful tune of Old Hundred: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," which from our united voices pealed out upon the sea, through companion, hatchway, and port-hole.

The east end of Cuba was now in plain sight, presenting a succession of rocky cliffs and barren mountains, intersected with deep, dark ravines running towards the coast. This end of the island is not susceptible of cultivation; but produces the well-known copper mines.

Being now well through the Windward Passage, we saw next morning the large and beautiful island of Jamaica; its villas and coffee plantations covering the hill sides in every direction. As we gazed upon the mountains capped with fleecy clouds, or diversified with sunlight and shadow, and beheld the beautiful valleys at their base, we felt that nature at least had done her part, in bestowing profusely her richest bounties and highest advantages.

Enervated by our sudden and rapid transition from the cold winter of the North to the uniform heat of the tropics, we now welcomed the refreshing trade winds; which, with the steady roll of the Caribbean Sea, its white-capped billows

flashing in the bright sunlight, caused the most delicious exhilaration of spirits.

As we neared the termination of our voyage at Chagres, we were discussing all sorts of plans for crossing the Isthmus, and some of the great men among us, the militia colonels, doctors, and bearers of despatches, presided over our deliberations, or spouted in the most effective mass-meeting style. All this resulted in the appointment of mule, boat, and baggage committees, which ended only in delay, vexation and trouble, although they exerted themselves to the utmost.

At noon of February 14th, the cry of land O! announced the shores of South America, and we were quickly on deck gazing at the wished-for sight. We soon neared the coast and sailed some fifty miles in full view; the shores bold with high hills rising in broken aspect one above another, covered to the water's edge, and even the rocks in the sea, with the profuse and extraordinary verdure of the tropics; displaying every imaginable hue of tree, flower, and plant, giving to the whole coast a feathery appearance, for no other word will describe the exuberant growth. In the distance, we gazed upon the famous Andes, and at 4 P. M. came to anchor amidst a furious shower of rain; a sort of welcome from the Isthmus and specimen of the *dry season.*

We now occupied ourselves in closing letters to friends, and in preparing to disembark, after which we had leisure to view the entrance to the Chagres River, guarded by the picturesque old Spanish fort of San Lorenzo situated on a commanding eminence, and to watch the careering buzzards and clumsy pelicans for ever hovering over the town of Chagres, a few huts only of which could be seen from the ship, with the graceful palmetto and cocoanut trees in the distance.

CHAPTER II.

Chagres—Castle of San Lorenzo—Old Ram-Hos Canoas—Bungos—Patrones, Pigs, and Porros.

A JABBER of bad Spanish, intermingled with yells of *vamos* and *caramba*, or another more common and vulgar oath, saluted us as we looked over the side next morning, at the strange scene below. Large *dug outs*, or canoes, made from the single trunk of the bay tree, or common mahogany, surrounded the ship, filled with Negroes, Indians, and Creoles, nearly or quite naked; rolling up the whites of their eyes at us, and vociferating for cargo in tones that were a caution to ourang-outangs. Their ludicrous gestures, mingled with the outlandish and eternal clatter of their tongues, afforded abundant amusement, which was further enhanced by their continual alarm at the frequent collision of their boats, and the raps which they received on the head or shoulders from descending trunks, bales, and boxes. The negroes appeared to be a mixture of the African and Moorish race, the thick lips and woolly hair being in many of them accompanied with straight or somewhat aquiline noses, while the nostril of the full-blooded Congo revealed an amplitude sufficient to indicate his unquestioned descent from the dusky children of Ham. The Indians were few in number, and diminutive in appearance, manifesting the common characteristic of their race—

a dogged submission to the necessity of labor. Both negroes and Indians were evidently beneath the control of the Creoles, who were generally the patrones or captains, and owners of the boats—the least dash of the blood of the white man being sufficient to assert either the supremacy or tyranny of his race here, as in all other countries.

Having disposed all our baggage in readiness for landing, and maintained possession of the lighter articles, we took our seats in one of the ship's boats, and were rowed ashore—a distance of some three miles, to the town of Chagres. As we bid adieu to the gallant steamer which had borne us with speed and safety over 2,200 miles of ocean, we realized more completely the nature and length of our journey. Now commenced the hardships and discomforts of our route: the comforts and luxuries of home were behind us, the dreaded Isthmus and comparatively unknown Pacific coast before. The only reflection, however, which we bestowed upon the matter was, that the way was before us, and we were going ahead.

As we approached the shore, we gazed with admiration upon the picturesque and romantic old Spanish Castle of San Lorenzo, whose dark and ruined battlements, crowning the bold bluff at the entrance of the river, looked with proud desolation out upon the sea, which, with the eternal war of breakers, was still bidding defiance to the hoary hand of Old Time, whose relentless grasp had thrown parapet and gun to the base of the cliff. The forsaken watch-tower of the sentry, covered with dank moss and crumbling decay, tenanted now only by the screaming wild fowl, afforded a melancholy lesson to us in the thought, that while the demon of war deserts his ancient abodes, it is only to gird his loins with new panoply; and aided by the science of modern times, to go forth in

greater "pomp and circumstance," to the feast of blood. We afterwards visited the interior of this fortress; and ascending the hill by the old paved road, entered at the principal gateway by a drawbridge extended over a wide and deep fosse encircling the entire work, but now quite dry and green with tropical verdure. Within the walls we found numerous old cannon, mostly dismounted and covered with rust; and on some of them could decipher the date 1745, with the Royal Arms of Spain. Beyond this outer fort was the main citadel, on the verge of the cliff, towards the ocean, and approached by still another drawbridge, isolated also by a separate fosse. Here were some brass cannon in better preservation, and the entrance to the magazine, containing some damp and useless old powder. The view from the battlements we found extensive and very beautiful. To the northward and eastward stretched away the blue Caribbean Sea, to the southward and westward rose the varied peaks of the Andes of the Isthmus, while at our feet lay the town of Chagres, with the mouth of the river almost concealed from view by the immense variety of tropical vegetation.

Such pleasing impressions, however, were soon forgotten on the occasion of our first landing in the far-famed Chagres. Here were, indeed, Pluto's dominions, and here was the veritable Styx. Amidst hundreds of canoes, our boat was forced up on the low sandy beach, and we jumped ashore to find ourselves surrounded by a host of Charons, whose dark visages and rude paddles belied not the comparison. As soon as we could escape from the yells of "*Canoa! canoa! a Cruces! a Gorgona!*" and the incessant demand for *riales* and *pesos*, we strolled into the town, which we found to consist of about two hundred and fifty bamboo huts, with high-peaked roofs of dried palmetto leaves, situated in a complete morass—the

streets or lanes exhibiting the remains of a species of rough paving, and filled with a confused mixture of dogs, hogs, and naked children, negroes and creoles. All was excitement, wonder, and amazement at the tremendous irruption of Americanos. The women abandoned their corn-pounding, or relinquished hair combing in the doorways—the children, with a jerk, released their heads from the searching process, and gathered around us—the latter being *a la Cupid*, though not without dressing either, being enormously stuffed *a la Falstaff*, exciting our laughter continually. The women dressed suitably to the climate, with naught but petticoat and chemise, seemed transported with the novelty and excitement. The innumerable, lank, miserable dogs and pigs, left sole occupants of the huts, availed themselves with activity of the chance to play an extensive and voracious game of cribbage; and the disgusting but useful buzzards, gathered in solemn rows on the house-tops, to view the unwonted commotion in their favorite haunts.

Presently we saw approaching the tall and stately *padre* of the town, arrayed in his priestly robes of rich black silk and shovel sombrero. As he passed, every one bowed respectfully, and he returned all with courtesy. He was going to attend the funeral of a child said to have died from the bite of a centipede—a most unusual, and even in this instance, doubtful circumstance.

Not having the fear of the "Chagres fever" before our eyes, we wandered through the whole of this delectable village, and found scarcely a house but presented some new or ridiculous scene—some odd or disgusting exhibition. Very few of the huts contained more than one room. In the ground-floor in the centre were large rough stones; between these the fire was kindled for cooking purposes. An iron pot or pan

placed upon the stones contained coffee, frijoles, or tortillas, while seated on the ground, the women attended to the cookery, and combed their hair at intervals. Pigs wandered in and out quite unmolested; and *perros*, or dogs, without number, thrust inquisitive noses into larder, pot, and pan, disturbed but rarely, and then only by a shout, as these people have a greater regard for their dogs than their children; which we could only account for by observing that the former being quite hairless, occasioned none of the trouble inseparable from the woolly crowns of the bipeds. Even this ingenious theory was subsequently demolished; for we saw some of the people living on pickings and stealings, in more senses than one. Laziness and listlessness seemed to prevail among all. Every house had the everlasting hammock, in which they sleep at night and lounge all day. The women were slip-shod or barefoot—the men ragged or hatless; and all were dirty and greasy. A flock of buzzards would present a favorable comparison.

Returning from our ramble we joined a crowd of our countrymen, congregated with indignant gesticulation around the large barn-like hut of an old creole trader and canoeman, whom we denominated by the soubriquet of Old Ram-Hos.

The committee sent ashore the previous day had made a contract in writing with them, engaging a sufficient number of canoes for a specified sum, to convey all of us with our baggage to Cruces or Gorgona. The terms were highly liberal on our part, being dictated solely by themselves. When the contract was signed, the committee proposed to have it certified by the Alcalde, or chief magistrate of the town, but to this very correct and usual procedure they strenuously and most indignantly objected: no indeed, they were gentlemen, men of honor; their word was as good as their bond.

The committee finally yielded the point, chiefly relying upon the liberal sum agreed to be paid by us. Surprised at our facile compliance with their original demand, they determined at once to bolt from their contract, and had now done so, demanding the most exorbitant prices for canoes.

The remonstrances and threats of Captain Stoddard on our behalf were for a long time unavailing, when our patience becoming quite exhausted, revolvers were quickly put in efficient condition, and bowie knives made their persuasive appearance. Whip the rascal, fire his den, burn the settlement, annex the Isthmus, were heard on all sides. Fortunately for themselves the high contracting parties understood English, and their ears being sensitive at the moment, and their nerves more so, the dirty brown of their complexion speedily changed to a livid white, and they came down in their villanous demands, barely in time to save their shantee from a come down on their heads. Their rascality, however, was in the main accomplished, in the way in which they had cunningly foreseen and intended; for many of our impetuous young men, led by the example of a few selfish old travellers among us, and wearied with delay, had engaged canoes for themselves, making private bargains on the best terms they could; but even then they were frequently deprived of a canoe after the bargain was concluded, on the plea that others would pay more. As soon as this game was understood by us, we quietly selected and took possession of the canoes which we required, agreeing to pay them eight dollars each person for passenger canoes, and at the rate of about three dollars per hundred pounds for baggage to Cruces or Gorgona, half to be paid in advance.

Anxious now to be off, our party of four took possession of a light little canoe or dug-out, provided, as in all cases, with

a bungo, or species of roof made of the branches and leaves of the palmetto, extending some six or eight feet in length, and just high enough to creep under upon our hands and knees; leaving space enough at the stern for the seat of the *patron*, or captain, who, with a short broad paddle,both aided to propel and steer the canoe. The *patron* was a little nimble creole of Porto Bello, named Leon; his face strongly marked with small-pox, and seeming to be full of eyes, as the two small and piercing black orbs with which his countenance was garnished, were eternally dancing like fire-flies in every direction. Speaking a little English, of which accomplishment he was very vain, his tongue kept time with his eyes in an incessant fandango of bad Spanish and worse English. Stationed in the bows of the canoe was Pantaleon, a negro lad, silent, strong and industrious; and the poor fellow had need of all these qualities, for on him devolved the hard work of poling up stream against the rapid current. At length after two hours more delay in getting these worthies into the canoe, and providing bottles of water to last us above tide; in beating dogs, pigs, and poultry off from our provisions, and escaping from the crowd of *patrones* and canoemen, we commenced our voyage up the Rio Chagres, with our expert navigators surnamed Loon and Panteloon, both bereft of the latter article, but provided with a coarse short shirt, some sausages, and a bottle of Cogniac, which we observed was not long to last.

CHAPTER III.

Ascent of the Chagres River—Scenes and Incidents—Gatun—Dos Hermanos—Palenquilla—A Night on the River and one on the Shore—Monkeys—Iguana--Parrots--Shooting Alligator--Arrival at Gorgona.

Rejoiced at our release from the vexatious annoyances and tedious delays of Chagres, we commenced our journey toward the Pacific with renewed spirit.

Entering the river immediately from the little cove at the mouth of which lies Chagres, our senses were entranced by the beauty of the scene that opened upon us. Every faculty was at once absorbed in admiration of the earthly paradise which surrounded us.

The river itself, a beautiful limpid stream about fifty yards wide, was dotted in every direction with the gondola-shaped canoes, some descending the middle of the current with great rapidity, others like our own, stemming the quiet water by the green shore; while from beneath the shady bungo we watched the flashing paddles, or gazed with unsated eyes upon the glorious scenery, listening amidst the thousand strange warblers of the groves for some familiar song, or startled by the wild cry of the canoemen as they shouted to each other from every turn in the perpetually winding stream.

Neither pencil or pen can do justice to the surpassing views ever present to the eye of the traveller on this river. Varying in width from fifty to one hundred yards, its crystal

waters roll over a clear, pebbly or bright, sandy bottom, pursuing a perfectly labyrinthine course, embracing here the entire base of some spur of the mountain, or there forming an island in the vale; thus traversing nearly fifty miles, when the direct course from the head of navigation to the coast is only about twenty miles.

The shores, at first low and marshy, soon become more elevated, and are crowned with the most exuberant and abundant vegetation. Nature seems to have bestowed here even more than tropical profusion; for, as in the forests of Brazil, there appears to be no space unoccupied by tree or plant, flower or vine. The banana and plantain, the palmetto, the graceful cocoanut and cabbage tree, the papa and mango, bearing their delicious fruit; the pine apple, orange and lime, were seen in all directions; while among the endless groves we could occasionally spy the tall sugar cane growing spontaneously and in the greatest luxuriance. The air was redolent with fragrance from innumerable varieties of flowers, and the wood resounded with the melody of feathered songsters of the most delicate or gorgeous plumage, or echoed with the noisy chatter and scream of monkeys and parrots.

Through such new and enchanting scenes we pursued our winding way, scarce conscious of the lapse of time, till the setting sun cast his crimson and mellow light upon hill-side, valley and stream, and the darkening shadows of wood and ravine recalled the wanderers of earth and air to rest and repose.

The transition from daylight to darkness is of course very sudden within the tropics; but although deprived of the delightful hour of our northern twilight, we were fully compensated by the dazzling beauty of the night. The moon and

stars shone with wonderful brilliancy, and the air was filled with large fire flies, sparkling like gems of sapphire.

While enjoying the novelty of the scene, our canoe men struck up a wild nasal chant, a sort of Spanish improvisatore, which Leon informed us was about "de good canoe, de good casa, and de good muger," the latter alluding to house and wife.

Proceeding thus for three or four hours, we saw the lights of habitations on shore; and the barking of dogs, crying of children and beating of drums, soon apprised us of our approach to the village of Gatun.

Forcing our canoe into a regular flotilla, we scrambled up the banks, and following the direction of the sights and sounds, were quickly in the midst of the villagers. Here we found others of our countrymen, and received, like them, a cordial welcome. A table was spread in front of one of the principal houses in the street, covered with clean cloth, and sundry odd-looking red earthern jugs, jacks, and jars. Acceding without ceremony to the polite invitation of a very pretty creole señorita,

> "We each took a smack
> Of the *blood-red* jack,"

and then fell to with eager appetites upon tortillas, fresh rolls, cakes, and, in fact, all eatables within reach, to the great dismay of the Gatunos. The cry for *café* meantime rose loud and long; but we found the only way to obtain it was to cease eating; for, like the Spanish, these people could not be made to comprehend that the Americanos drink their coffee with their food, instead of at the close of the meal, as is their custom. This afterwards occasioned many ludicrous scenes, and *bothered* both los Yankees and their entertainers more than a little.

Paying cheerfully the few riales demanded for our meal, we took our way further into the village, and found the principal street well swept, and crowded by the jabbering and merry natives. The beating of a small monotonous drum, betokened the incessant fandango; but the excitement about the Americanos and the pesos or dollars to be made out of them, seemed to absorb all else. We had determined, on first landing, to sleep here; but we had not yet become sufficiently accustomed to the miserable huts, dirty hammocks, and insects smaller but more dreaded by us than centipede or scorpion.

After some trouble we found Leon and Pantaleon, and to our orders to go-ahead, or *vamos*, they manifested much disappointment; but a cup of *café*, a fresh supply of cogniac, and a promise of a shirt for each, quite reconciled them to proceed all night. With the eternal cigar, which was as constantly in their mouths as the paddle in their hands, we were quickly in the stream; and now came the tug of war to poor Pantaleon; for the river being low at this season, he was obliged to relinquish the easy paddle, and take to the laborious pole, forcing the canoe against a strong current by sheer muscular exertion. In this way we could only progress at the rate of one or two miles an hour, often being driven back —the strength of the current requiring the most unremitting effort.

Leon, the patron, now displayed his laziness and rascality, as he would do nothing but steer the canoe and urge us to land. We at once proposed to throw him overboard, duck him, flog him, tie him, and stop his grog; but the fear of "no cogniaca" restored him to duty. We, therefore, stowed ourselves away under our bungo, four in number, in a space eight feet long by two wide, the only way to manage being to "put our heads together," and lie "spoon fashion," and with our

heavy pilot coats on, the interstices were well filled. Often were we aroused by the clatter of branches of sunken trees against our canopy, and as often lulled to repose again by the rocking canoe and rippling stream. It being the dry season, the early part of the night was free from dews and fog; but as morning approached, the miasma from the shore was oppressive and offensive in the extreme. At this hour we were also aroused by the most extraordinary sounds, produced by monkeys, iguanas, and some of the larger varieties of the feathered tribes—the latter producing a noise resembling the violent collision of two stones under water, while the former seemed to have filled the forests with Chinese gongs innumerable, and thousands of steamboats, high and low pressure, blowing off steam in every direction. Beginning at a long distance, these sounds roared around us till echo herself was confounded.

We welcomed the morning light as it quickly dispelled the mist; and the rising sun displayed to our view the little village of Dos Hermanos, (or Two Brothers,) where we landed, and were speedily engaged in discussing our breakfast, consisting of thick black mud and water called *café*, which was not too hot to allow the dogs occasionally to stir it up with their noses. "Throw physic to the dogs" exclaimed one and all, as we turned our attention to claret and water for a time, and a coarse set of ragamuffin biscuits as a stay for our stomachs.

This day we got our fowling-pieces in order, and obtained some wild turkey—numerous here but quite small; a species also of wild peacock, some blue and white heron, besides having a shot now and then at long distance for monkeys, parrots, and other birds nameless and unknown.

Approaching near to shore at mid-day, we saw on the sedgy

margin a strange and ugly-looking creature, exactly answering to our ideas of a regular Egyptian crocodile in miniature. Giving him the contents of one barrel, he made a desperate effort to escape into the bushes; but Leon, active for once, shouting, "*Iguana! iguana!*" rushed after him, and soon returned, holding him by the tail, with gloating eyes, exclaiming, "*Bueno! bueno! huevos! huevos!*"* It was of greenish bronze, and dirty yellow, with scaly skin, four short legs with claws, a tail like a serpent, and head of lizard or crocodile, and about three feet in length from tip to tip. After satisfying our curiosity, we handed it over to Leon, who valued it as a great prize: and as we discovered at dinner time, extracted more than thirty eggs from it of the size of a quail's, having a tough, white skin, but no shell. These he boiled and tied in a row like Weathersfield onions, for after entertainment, considering them a great luxury. We know not which string would be most wholesome, but think the Weathersfielders would "clare de kitchen" soonest. We mean no offence, however, to our Yankee friends, and hope they will not turn up their noses at the odorous comparison.

This afternoon, while two of our party were availing themselves of a sand-beach to walk and collect agates, we were aroused from our siesta under the shady bungo, by a low, quick cry from Pantaleon, of "*Aligador! Aligador!*" and following the direction of his eager eye and bony finger, we saw what appeared at first to be the remains of a dead tree, gray from decay, lying near the edge of the water, about fifty yards distant, but which was really an alligator, and the first we had discovered. A ball was passed through his ugly head without further ceremony from Colt's large revolver, by one of the party who claimed to be a good shot, and proved him-

* Good! good! eggs! eggs!

self such, at least on this occasion; for head and tail, mud, blood, and water, flew up in the air, and the convulsed wretch floundered into the stream to meet a cordial reception from the jaws of his tribe. He was about five feet long, and the only specimen we saw, though some of our fellow-travellers met with them as long as nine feet, and quite in crowds.

Thus passed our second day on the Chagres; but the last incident caused us to defer our purpose of bathing in the clear, soft water of the river, which, at this season, is also sweet and delicious to drink. We now began to inquire of every passing canoe, "*Quantos leguas a Gorgona?*"—Spanish borrowed of lazy Leon for the occasion, and which answered for our inquiry of, "How many leagues to Gorgona?" But they seemed to have no idea of distance, some answering quite differently from others; and, in fact, the number of leagues seemed to increase as we advanced. This was afterwards rendered more amusing by the explanation of an intelligent Spanish gentleman, that "down the river the distance was very short, but to Gorgona a great many leagues." Thus distance seemed to be measured, and pretty wisely too, by the difficulties of the way, and the time expended to overcome them. Full many a persevering or wearied traveller on the River of Life has found that, however laborious, tedious, or uncertain his ascent of that turbulent and winding stream during the active years of manhood, his descending bark, though guided, mayhap, by the steady hand of experience, floats noiselessly, yet swiftly, in the rapid mid-current, while years dwindle to months, and months to days, as he watches for his entrance upon the great Ocean of Eternity.

The rascally Leon had faithfully promised us to arrive at Gorgona that evening, in especial consideration of the two shirts begged the night previous; but the day declined into

evening and evening into night, and yet the weary Pantaleon was straining to his bending pole, songless, silent, and now ominous event, even cigarless. In vain we offered him one by way of encouragement, and his loved cogniaca lay neglected at his feet. Exhausted nature could accomplish no more, and we marvelled not, after twenty-eight hours incessant labor without sleep, and almost without rest; so we hauled the canoe up on a sandy beach in a bend of the stream and made our camp there, building a fire to keep off mosquitoes and reptiles. Here we were greatly incensed at the mean and lazy Leon, for leaving Pantaleon to aid in making the fire, he rolled himself up in his dirty blanket and quickly disturbed the alligators by his barbarous snoring. We seriously discussed the propriety of burying him alive as a warning to all lazy *patrones*, when the suggestion that he was already well covered with *soil* caused us precipitately to abandon our benevolent intention. Before morning another canoe joined us, and its people gladly gathered around our fire. At two o'clock, the moon rising, we kicked lazy Leon into wakefulness and activity, and resumed our slow and toilsome progress. The following day we reached Palenquilla, a picturesque little hamlet on an elevated and level part of the shore. Near it we saw a large and beautiful plantation filled with sugar cane, while above and below, the margin of the river was gorgeous with every variety of tree, leaf, and plant, perfectly overgrown with vines bearing exquisite flowers; and one species of large tree was clothed completely with crimson passion flowers, in description similar to ours, but four times larger.

Just after our enjoyment of this scene, we were treated to another, highly ludicrous, and affording much fun and gratification. We had reached a short turn in the stream, where the current was very strong over a pebbly bottom; in fact,

there were rapids on a small scale. Pantaleon, immediately depriving his ebony form of his fashionable short skirts, leaped overboard, displaying above water only the outlines of a bust, capped by a pair of shoulders which, besides their dusky hue, were as rounded and shining too, as the back of the leader of a great school of rolling porpoises. Lazy Leon, obliged to follow his example, waded along for some time by the stern, aiding in the progress of the canoe, with vinegar countenance. Presently he relinquished his hold, intending to follow at his ease in our wake, but the current was so strong that he could barely keep his feet, making no progress; then commenced a volley of vociferations, yells, oaths, prayers, and commands to Pantaleon to return for him, but all in vain, for fun we had, and mischief we were bent on. So we called out to him, *no entender*, (we don't understand,) speak English, Master Leon; come on board quick, quick, *quantos leguas a Gorgona;* all which increased his fury, till, livid with rage, and well ducked, by losing his footing and being carried down the rapids, we hauled him on board, with the aid of Pantaleon's pole, and he returned to duty an altered man, as his whitened skin plainly betokened.

We now approached bolder shores and observed trap rock on some of the banks, while directly in front of us uprose a mountain in the shape of an immense mass of conical verdure from whose bowels the river seemed to gush into sudden being; but we soon glided around its sweeping base and beheld on a high bluff beyond, Gorgona, "the place of rocks," and the welcome termination of our long pilgrimage of forty-one hours, for the accomplishment of as many miles in the tortuous and rapid Chagres.

CHAPTER IV.

Gorgona—Hotel Francaise—The Alcalde and his House—New Grenadian Justice—Self-Punishment of the Criminal—A Swim in the Chagres, and Dance at a Fandango—Camp of Engineers--Departure for Panama.

We found at Gorgona a collection of about one hundred houses; and natives in all respects similar to those of Chagres, except that among the former were fewer Creoles. The scene here partakes of a bolder and more varied character. From the high table-land on which the town is built, mountains rise in every direction, forming a complete amphitheatre perpetually reflected from the sparkling streamlet in their midst.

Gratified, however, as we had been with the beauty of the river, we gladly escaped from our confined and cramped position in the canoe, and ascending the precipitous bank, preceded by a string of natives carrying our traps, were ushered into an *adobe* house with tiled roof, denominated by the sounding title of Hotel Francaise. Here joining more of our famished travellers we made furious onslaught on mule steaks and other delicacies of the season, washed down by some very good coffee and tea or claret. Breakfast, dinner and tea were continually in progress from morning till night, and the "Francaise" was the crack Hotel of the place. As the

sleeping apartments, *id est:* the hammocks and floors were all, however, "mortgaged" to previous comers, we were fain to take up our abode with the Alcalde, or chief magistrate, of the town; who, besides being the richest man, was notorious as the greatest rascal and cheat in Gorgona.

The fellow was a mixture of Spanish and negro, wore spectacles for dignity, and was deaf for convenience: all unmistakeable signs of a *big bug*. He dealt largely *in stocks*, and *on time*, too, as the wasted legs of many a poor lame duck of a native could testify. True, he did not drive his carriage, being unable to pony-up, for want of horse flesh, which was all made sweep steaks of, for the only course furnished at his table.

He had, however, an extensive *turn-out* every day, as his lodgers testified that they were obliged to *flea* frequently, retreating from the boot avenue with *four-in-hand*.

We also discovered that he was a *large operator* in pork which had died a natural death, and, in fact, it only remained for him to establish an extensive correspondence with the *other side*, and a well-sustained system of advances on "bills of lading," in order to rank as a very prominent man abroad as well as at home.

Of such a distinguished host had we now become the guest, sharing with many others, at a round sum, the hospitalities of his house, in common with sundry pigs, hogs, dogs, and naked children. The aforesaid house was built of *adobe*, or *sun-dried* bricks, or rather of mud-walls, with bamboo and palmetto thatched roof, extending over a space of about twenty feet in width, by sixty in length, divided at each end into two small rooms; while the grand apartment between, with doors and windows on both sides, served for eating and sleeping. The ground floor, swept only on saints' days or

holy days, was garnished with a large, rough board table, benches of similar material, and a few chairs seated with mule or horse hide. From two rows of uprights that supported the roof, were suspended some eight or ten coarse and dirty grass hammocks, and in these such as were lucky enough to get possession, sought repose for the night. The first night of our arrival some fifty slept here, and besides two moored, stem and stern, in each hammock, the floor, tables, chairs, and benches, trunks and boxes, were occupied in a similar manner. The nights being cold in comparison with the day, we were obliged as well by other precautions to sleep in our clothes, retaining even overcoats, boots and hats. For though we saw neither centipede nor scorpions here, yet we considered some kind of covering for the head quite indispensable. The following day, becoming tired of eating mule steaks, dead pork, and iguana pie, we made a regular descent upon the villagers, in search of bread, eggs, and oranges. Of these we obtained some, though at exorbitant prices. Finding that we would be detained a few days, awaiting the arrival of our baggage, we now sought out an old hut in another part of the village, occupied by a live Yankee named John Smith, of course, and there we feasted, for the remainder of our abode, on eggs and slap-jacks. With his two big *b'hoys* to assist him, this enterprising restaurateur employed every moment in turning the pan-cakes, which were as rapidly turned down by his crowd of hungry expectants.

The old rascal of an Alcalde had yet the audacity to charge us one dollar per day for board at his barn or stable, begging his pardon for the appellation, yet doubting if any respectable American horse would enter there, provided he had any regard for his standing, and more especially his repose.

Wandering through the village we found a few little shops, embellished sometimes with fancy china ware, but chiefly supplied with *aguardiente*, wines and cordials; and the rows of empty and half empty bottles showed that the money earned from the Americans had not subserved the cause of temperance.

Situated on a rising ground, we also discovered the old church or cathedral; and a ricketty old building it is, a large part being entirely in ruins, and the remainder now in use, being enclosed on one side by a rude board partition, through the chinks of which we could perceive the altar and the images of various saints. The padre whom we met and conversed with was very polite, especially when he learned that we abode with the Alcalde, with whom it was said he was a partner. He very kindly urged us not to go to Panama too soon, as the cholera and yellow fever would be there at this season. We thanked him, and played at the game of politeness so well, that one of our number obtained his horse for the journey; and a good one he proved to be, though at a good round price.

In this climate we were told it was unsafe for strangers to bathe much in cold water; but determined, at least, to try the experiment, we wended our way early one beautiful morning to a shady beach below the town, where the river makes a graceful curve, its rapid current subsiding quickly into tranquil repose. Here, in company with several others, we enjoyed a fine swimming bath in the soft and pure water, while farther down, the natives, men, women, and children, were indulging in a general paddle. The stream appeared to be filled with fish, some of which precisely resembled our speckled mountain trout, and were so tame as to approach and rub themselves against our persons; but all our attempts

at hooking them with the line were unavailing. Returning thence, we came upon a fine and quite extensive sugar plantation, where the cane, with as many as twelve and fifteen joints, was growing in the greatest luxuriance, and without apparent cultivation. We also saw Indian corn, the stalk several feet in height. This is a great article of food with the natives, who pound it between two large smooth stones, and after a further process make *tortillas*, and corn-cake, or bread of it—both of which we found most agreeable to the taste. They also make a kind of cocoa cake of the cocoanut, pounded and gently boiled with the juice of the sugar-cane. Emerging from this plantation, we visited the rude sugar-mill employed to crush the cane. It is of the simplest and most ancient construction; and the juice being allowed to ferment in large wooden vessels, forms an intoxicating drink much liked by the natives.

Some of our party also ascended the high conical mountain seen as we came up the river, and were much gratified with the wonderful vegetation and fine view. A learned doctor who accompanied us, being also naturalist, botanist, and geologist, lingered long amidst these fascinating scenes; and it was only when our fears for his safety became intensely painful, that he returned to us laden with botanical and geological specimens, and his bowie-knife reeking with the blood of an enormous and dangerous reptile which he had slain. Among his specimens was one of native lead of especial beauty and value, but which some of the Turks among us (for science has her opponents everywhere) basely insinuated was a stone rubbed by the kettle of an old camp-fire.

While here we witnessed an amusing and, to republicans, altogether a strange scene. The penal laws of New Grenada are quite severe and summary; and to ensure their certain

application, great power is confided to Alcaldes of villages and towns, who are amenable to the chief Alcaldes and governors. Hearing a scuffle and vociferous outcry, attended with the furious jabbering of the natives, we made a rush to the bar-room of the Alcalde, where both liquors and justice were dispensed at dear rates. There, surrounded by the odoriferous and greasy crowd, stood a gigantic Othello of a fellow, charging *himself* before the Alcalde with whipping a diminutive little Creole at his side, who was livid with rage, and vehemently entering a similar complaint against his own prowess in thrashing Othello. This difference of opinion as to who was vanquished was well-nigh coming to another fight, and the prospect for fun was believed by *the fancy* to be good. Meantime above the top of the adjoining partition, and over the heads of the crowd, appeared the heads of Madame Alcalde and her daughters—the former to see that her lord demanded enough *pesos* of the culprits, and the young *señoritas* to laugh and jeer at all whose attention they could secure for that object. The terrible *Alcalde* now put glasses across his nose, and applying one containing *aguardiente* to his mouth, assumed pen, ink, and paper. Silence reigned throughout the court, disturbed only by the tittering of the women, scratching among the men, and loud yells of sundry naked little *criers*. The Alcalde then writing down the names of the culprits, and nature of their offence, sentenced the big Othello to pay a fine of six dollars, and be placed in the stocks four hours. The little Creole, who was first to bring the case before him, he let off with a sentence to *treat the whole crowd*. This at once accounted for the tight squeeze in the court-room; and if none went out *tight*, it was only because the Alcalde filled their glasses himself.

But the most extraordinary part of this performance was to

come ; for Othello paid down his fine in hard dollars, gulped his *aguardiente*, (the Alcalde considerately allowing him to fill his own glass,) and walking deliberately to the prison, placed his feet in the stocks himself, where the fumes of the large draught of *aguardiente* which he took good care to imbibe, enabled him to snooze away his four hours very comfortably. Thus the cunning *Alcalde* secured frequent appeals to the bar of Justice, by favoring the first complainant, while his bar of Bacchus flourished, and his popularity increased, by the sentence of a general treat. O, Momus, hold thy sides.

And yet we have seen similar leniency displayed to the complainant, before the magistrates of a certain city we wot of in the Great Republic, where brotherly love most doth reign.

While tarrying here, we visited one day the camp of the engineers engaged in the great and important work of the survey of the Isthmus ; and by the polite invitation of Captain Tilghman, who was then in command of the corps, we dined with them *en famille*. Their hospitality and kind attentions will ever be cherished by us with the liveliest satisfaction. The encampment was a very beautiful one, on a green plain, back of the town, near the skirt of the woods and a fine spring of pure water.

The last night we tarried at Gorgona, a grand *fandango* came off, and hearing the merry beating of the drums we joined the crowd. In front of one of the houses were seated two of the men, strumming a monotonous cadence on drums made of the cocoa-tree, half the size of a common pail, held between their knees, and another with the small Spanish guitar, which furnish the universal music on these occasions. The revellers form a ring, in the midst of which as many as

choose enter into the dance. This consists generally of a lazy, slow shuffle, until excited by *aguardiente*, and emboldened as night progresses, the women dance furiously up to their favorites among the men, who are then obliged to follow suit, all joining in a kind of nasal squeal or chant. There is nothing graceful in their mode of dancing, but, on the contrary, their motions are often indecent and disgusting.

On our way through the village to this scene, we came upon a smaller affair of the same description of amusement, which was going on in front of one of the liquor shops, and with proportionate noise and confusion. Here a little Creole, who, from the restless flash of his coal-black eyes, might bear the cognomen of Diablo, was dancing with all his might and main. He was evidently bully among the men, and cock of the walk; and seeing us in his audience, came up and began to dance close to us, with a sort of challenging, swaggering air. Watching him a moment, and seeing that he was half intoxicated, and would soon give out if put to the test, one of our party commenced a regular hoe-down, knocking his shins with heavy boots when opportunity offered, by way of *tattoo*, thus provoking him and keeping him to his own game, till, at last, he became quite exhausted, and fairly broke down. The yells of derision, the laughter and jeering of his companions, with his own chop-fallen aspect, were ludicrous in the extreme. "*Bueno! bueno! Señor Americano!*"* shouted his rivals in great glee, in the midst of which we departed, having had our full share of the fun going on in that party. At a late hour we retired to our hammocks; and while listening to the distant drum and guitar, and watching the stars twinkling through the palmetto roof, fell asleep, to be aroused at daybreak by the same sounds, which the revellers had thus kept

* Good, good, Sir American.

up all night long, literally exemplifying the old song of, "We won't go home till morning."

Next day, having contracted to have our baggage forwarded by an American within a specified time, and obtained one wretched little animal to ride, called a horse, we took our departure, two in company, for Panama and the Pacific.

CHAPTER V.

Isthmus in the Dry Season—Gorgona Road—Views from the Andes—Muleteers and Cargadores—Prospect of a Fight, and Comical Termination—Mountain Rills and Ravines—Rancho and Camp on the Summit—Approach to Panama—Entrance by Starlight.

One mounted on a miserable palfrey, the size of a St. Bernard dog, and the delight of Sancho Panza, had he been there to see, and the other trudging along with double-barrel on shoulder, we took a narrow pathway across the table-land, and speedily struck into the thick forest at the base of the hills. Glad to be again in progress, and to escape from the hot sun even at this early hour, we welcomed the refreshing shade, and listened with increased delight to the thousand songsters of the groves. Not a drop of rain had fallen since the afternoon of our arrival off Chagres; and we found the climate, at this the *dry season*, pleasant and salubrious. With perfectly clear skies, the heat of the mid-day sun was not so oppressive as we anticipated, as a pleasant breeze sprang up every day, and the nights were cool and bracing. The *dry season proper* is from the first of December to the first of June; but February, March, and April are the only months when the traveller may confidently rely upon little or no rain; and at this time only is the Gorgona road traversable with any degree of comfort.

This we found to consist of a mere bridle-path, worn in the

sandy clay soil or soft calcareous rocks by the feet of the horses and mules. The trees and underwood appear to have been originally cleared from a small space on both sides, through which the road winds among the mountains—enclosed by impervious woods—ascending and descending perpetually, and sometimes very abruptly and precipitously. For many miles the path is worn into deep holes, the mules stepping continually from one to another, which, in process of time, have formed many narrow ravines, often several feet in depth. When entering one of these, we frequently heard shouts of muleteers approaching the opposite way, and were obliged to wait till they passed—the way often being so narrow that we were forced to lay on the backs or necks of our horses.

Thus, amid solitude and shade, we pursued our onward way —now plunging into the deep and gloomy chasms of the mountains, and anon rising the opposite ascent, till the distant openings in the forest, gradually restoring the welcome sunlight, revealed also mountain and valley yet to be traversed.

Views, ever varying in beauty or magnificence, and partaking of all the forms of natural scenery, were presented on every side to our delighted gaze. Descending the steep declivities with slow and cautious steps, the light of day imperceptibly faded away till twilight grew apace ; and the scream of the parrots, or twittering of birds, was exchanged for the low hum of insects or rustling of serpents, while the gurgling mountain rill fell like sweet music on the listening ear, or stole with silvery gleam and noiseless course, through the deep thickets, trellised with the wild flower and vine. Bathing awhile our weary limbs, and cooling our tired animals, we drank of the pure water, and again commenced our ascent to the realms of day, when, pausing upon the mountain side, we could see peak above peak rising to view, and the valleys be-

tween clothed with interminable forest, with here and there the brown palmetto thatch of a native's hut. Echoing, too, from every ravine or abrupt turn in our pathway, came the shrill cries of the *vaquero*, or hoarse shouts of the *cargadore*, mingled occasionally with our emphatic national *hurrah*. This the natives soon acquired, reiterating our shouts with a *hoo-rah*, which, though not quite the thing, seemed to afford them great glee.

Thus we met string after string of horses and mules, returning for fresh loads or *cargo*, tied each to the tail of the one in advance, the *vaquero* or muleteer riding behind with a long gad in his hand, his head covered with a broad-rimmed, parti-colored, coarse straw *sombrero*, which, with a pair of dirty pantaloons, and form naked to the waist, often completed his costume. These fellows were generally merry and contented enough—when alone, beguiling the way by some rude song; or when accompanied by others, jabbering, shouting, and gesticulating perpetually. But the poor *cargadores* seemed to share a sterner fate; for at each quiet nook or fallen tree, would we see some of them resting with their weary burdens and panting for breath, while the perspiration streamed from every pore. During the dry season, the natives who follow the business, are employed constantly in carrying baggage and freight on their backs. Lashing their burdens, which are commonly of about one hundred pounds weight, firmly to a kind of bamboo panier, with a band to the upper end to cross their forehead, and straps for their shoulders, they make the journey of twenty-four miles from Gorgona to Panama in two days, when not over-paid or over-worked; but since the great amount of travel across the Isthmus, they often consume several days.

After we had been sometime on the road, one of these

muleteers overtook us, and with many exclamations seemed to wish to deprive us of the horse. Thinking him rather too familiar we gave him such unmistakeable demonstrations of our disapproval, that he quickly *vamosed*, somewhat weaker in the knees. We however recalled him, and gave him the receipt for the hire of the horse supposing he might perhaps be the owner, and this seemed to restore him to vitality, for he went off again at a round pace. Proceeding a few miles further the wretched brute deposited himself and rider—without ceremony—in the road, evidently resolved upon taking a *siesta*, but receiving a severe kicking instead, he finally concluded to continue his rambles.

But our adventures did not end here, for soon four of the natives laid their hands simultaneously upon bridle and saddle, shouting and vociferating most furiously. Incensed at what we believed to be a new claim upon the miserable beast, for the hire of which we had already paid a most exorbitant sum, and supposing that they intended to get possession of him, the butt of a pistol was rapidly descending upon the pate of the nearest intruder, when he sprang aside like a monkey, much to our regret. Again, however, they all returned to the charge, when our *dander* being up high, the muzzle of the pistol was "in less than no time" in close range with his legs. Fortunately at this moment we were joined by another party of travellers, one of whom was well acquainted with the Spanish and at once explained. It appeared that the straw mat underneath the saddle had slipped from its position, and the back of the poor beast was in consequence badly chafed, which had also caused him to lie down, and the excited natives were only anxious to correct the difficulty.

Upon comprehending this, our anger and vexation vanished

into into a general outburst of laughter, and our four *hombres** capered about in the greatest glee crying, "*ah mucha mala senor, mucha mala*,"† to which we replied, "*muy bueno*" and "*mucha gracia*."‡ Replacing the saddle and receiving some *medios* for reward, they bid adieu to us amidst general mirth at the funny termination of the adventure. The one who had been in close proximity to the pistol, however, was transmuted by his fright from a dark darkey into a milky Creole.

Soon after this occurrence we met upon the road two straggling horses without saddle, bridle, or *vaquero*, and knowing by the brand that they belonged to the same individual who had imposed upon us already, we selected the best one and placing a rope around his nose for bridle, and strapping an overcoat on his back for saddle, pressed him into the service for the remainder of our road, and he proved quite an acquisition.

The sun was high in the heavens and the heat beginning to be felt even in these shades, when we reached the summit of the mountain range. Here we found another encampment of engineers, and hard by a *rancho* of a native. Resting a short time at the camp and partaking of a lunch of pilot bread and water, we commenced the latter half of our journey, looking in vain ere we left the summit for any glimpse of either the Atlantic or Pacific. On every side the view was shut in by the confused range of mountain above mountain, covered by the impervious woods. Thus we continued to jog on, riding and walking by turns, which we found a most excellent plan, occasionally making a detour into the woods on either hand. We saw great varieties of birds and insects, among the latter

* Friends.

† Corrupt Spanish for, "O very bad, sir, very bad."

‡ Very good and many thanks.

the large red and black ants with their hills several feet in height;* and another of our party, who crossed a few days after, shot an armadillo, his coat of mail not being proof to powder and ball.

Late in the afternoon we began to reach wider valleys and less precipitate paths, until we finally emerged upon a succession of savannahs or plains, dotted here and there with groves of mango, or crossed at intervals by belts of cotton-wood trees and underwood. Among these we noticed the black thorn tree, and many others unknown to us; gnarled and beautiful vines mingled with their branches, and the wild cactus grew all around, forming a complete chaparal. Through this we wound our way, appreciating more completely by observation, the nature of the difficulties so perseveringly surmounted by our armies in Mexico.

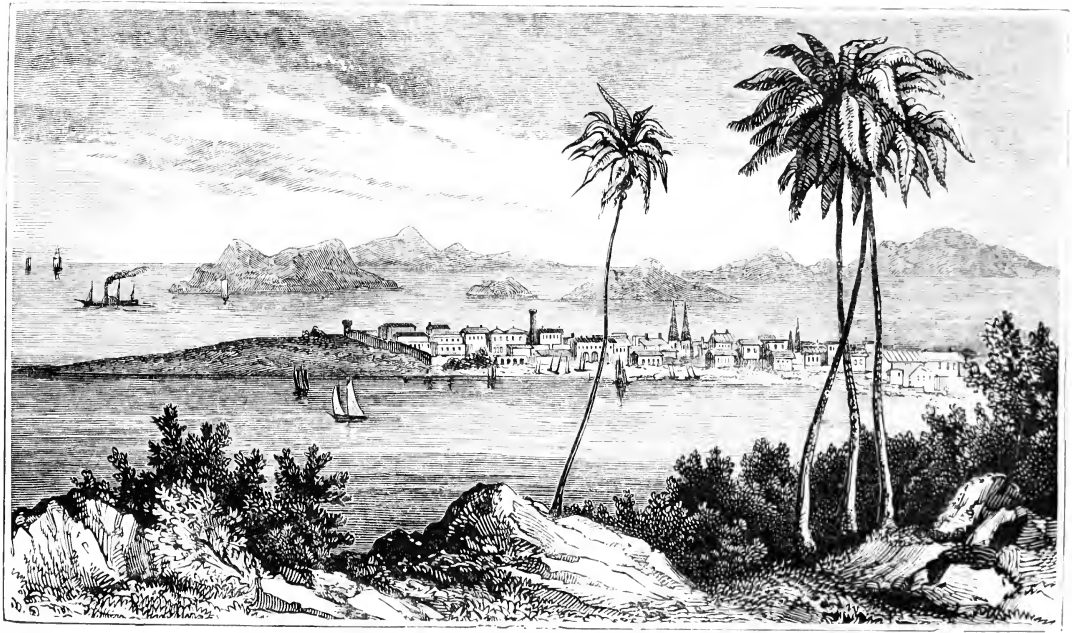
Leaving the Gorgona road, we now struck into the old paved road of the Spaniards, an old wooden cross and pile of stone by the wayside indicating either the grave of a robber, murderer, or suicide, or the junction of the two roads, as the imagination might determine.

We soon after crossed an old stone bridge over a beautiful little streamlet, and now began to distinguish among the distant groves the country houses of the citizens of Panama. Some of these were quite picturesque in the midst of large plantations, their foreground covered with flocks of goats or herds of fine cattle. Day was now rapidly declining, and the crimson rays of the setting sun on tree-top, valley and plain, betokened the early approach of night ere we could reach our destination. From each new eminence attained, we eagerly strained our vision to catch the first

* These ants often fight and the red always conquer, carrying off their captives to work.

glimpse of the great Pacific, and our animals, more wearied than ourselves, permitted those of us on foot to keep the lead, now eagerly sought by all. At length we began to overtake the aguadores, or water-carriers, conveying to the town their last burdens for the day, and to see the twinkling lights of the suburbs, rendered necessary by the closing shadows of night, which had settled over the town and country. These suburbs we found upon entering, to be quite extensive, the houses at first being of no better class than those on the other side of the Isthmus; but as we advanced nearer the walls of the town, we noticed houses of stone or frame, two or three stories in height.

Pausing at a little shop without the gates, we refreshed ourselves with some very sweet oranges, biscuit and Madeira wine, after which, joining the current of stragglers, we reached the wide, paved street, with a low wall on each side, leading to the Gorgona gate, or Puerte de Tierra. The moon had not risen, but the stars brightly shining, revealed the high arched gateway, surmounted with tower and bell, and rude stone cross, with the massive old walls, and deep fosse extending on each side, encircling the whole town in their complete, but now useless embrace. Within them we could trace the confused mass of tiled roofs and crumbling ruins, with the towers of the great cathedral rising in the midst, while beyond all, and beheld for the first time, were the glittering waters of the Pacific, and Bay of Panama, with the bold islands rearing their verdant crests like mountains in the sea. Welcome, thrice welcome now, to us was the far-famed Panama, and right glad were we to find ourselves in comfortable lodgings with a bare cot on which to rest our weary limbs, after ten hours of journeying in the Andes of the Isthmus.



PANAMA.

CHAPTER VI.

The Trip to California by the Isthmus Route—Suggestions to Travellers—Necessary Outfit—Trunks—Clothing—Provisions—Crossing the Isthmus in Dry or Rainy Season—Canoes and Mules—Forwarding Baggage—Attention to Health—Total Expenditure.

INTERRUPTING the course of the narrative as briefly as possible, I will here venture, with the reader's permission, to furnish some information to travellers across the Isthmus of Panama, both in the *dry* and *rainy* season.

In accomplishing this object, it is not my purpose to assume the office of an *adviser*, but merely to record the results of personal experience and observation—the judicious use and practical application of which, must depend entirely upon the sagacity of those who avail themselves of them.

The *dry season* is by far the most preferable for the journey, not only as to the passage of the Isthmus, but as to the time of arrival in California. With this purpose, it is proper to embark for Chagres at some date from the 1st of January to the 1st of May; and although the rainy season does not regularly set in upon the Isthmus until 1st June, yet more or less rain will be met with on the Chagres side and summit level after 1st April.

As an outfit, the traveller will, in my opinion, *essentially* require something like the following enumeration, viz.: two medium size *valise* trunks, made of best harness leather, provid-

ed with No. 1 *canvas* covers and *outside patent locks*—these, when filled, not to weigh over fifty or sixty pounds each; the contents to consist of an *extra* pair of heavy, and one pair light boots; a pair of slippers; a dozen each of woolen and cotton half hose; two pairs each of woolen and linen drawers; four merino or flannel under-shirts; two dozen good colored shirts with bosoms and collars; half a dozen white shirts and collars; and a suit of black or dark cloth for extra occasions; a suit of *strong*, colored, or grey cloth, (to sleep in and wear on the journey to Panama, and to wear north of Cape St. Lucas;) the vest single breasted, with buttons to the throat; *a suit* of thin, dark *Tweed*, and one of dark or plaid linen, with two extra vests, and pants of the same; handkerchiefs colored; cravats the same, both thin and heavy; a toilette case—towels and soap, not omitting salt water soap; a portfolio, with writing materials; a box each of blue pills and of Peruvian bark pills; a small glass leather-protected flask of cholera mixture; and a little adhesive plaster.

Here, truly, is a list to excite the risibility of an auctioneer; but we have not done yet, kind reader, although our two little trunks are packed and closed, after having selected what we intend to wear on embarcation.

A *heavy* dark pilot cloth overcoat, made long and ample, is *indispensable* to sleep in during the cool nights on the Isthmus, and to wear on the California coast, and in that country; also one pair of heavy blue blankets of good size, and not divided. Around these, when not in use, a piece of canvas or oil-cloth may be secured with a single leather strap and buckle, of which latter article it is well to provide two additional ones, made long to fasten baggage on a mule. Obtain an oil-silk cap, one of blue cloth, and a palm-leaf hat,

to wear on board ship in the different latitudes. At Chagres dispose of your palm-leaf, and purchase a Panama hat, and when exposed to the tropical sun, wear a newspaper in the crown of it. A small leather case FOR THE POCKET, containing a tooth-brush and comb; a pair of good mule-exhilarating spurs, and a stout sprig of old hickory to be used as cane or shillelah, complete the list of *indispensables both for the dry and rainy season.* If you are an inveterate sportsman, a double-barrel will come into play, otherwise all weapons are needless, except, perhaps, a large knife for carving.

In addition to the outfit for *all seasons* of the year, you will require during the eight months of the rainy season on the Isthmus, a pair of metallic India-rubber leggings, long enough to cover the instep and knee, a cape of the same material to button close around the neck, and reach a little below the saddle, and a good oil-silk cover made to fit over your Panama hat. If you choose to dispense with any portion of the list of clothing, so as to reduce the gross weight to sixty pounds, one trunk will answer your purpose; but if that weight is exceeded, two trunks such as I have described will prove far more convenient.

Steamers of light draught to navigate the Chagres River, are in process of construction; but from the great increase of travel by that route, as well as from other causes, canoes will be resorted to more or less for a considerable period—a small case of provisions will therefore be found a pleasant travelling companion. Get a small tin box with lid, handle, and *lock;* supply it with a little ham, pine-apple cheese, prepared chocolate, or ground coffee, ship biscuits and ginger-snaps, tin cup, knife, fork, and spoon, also a leather or wil-

low-protected flask each of best brandy and Monongahela whiskey.

Thus have I summed up a list of essentials for a trip to California via Panama; and those who contemplate the journey, will, it is hoped, derive some benefit from the adoption of these suggestions, which the general reader may as beneficially omit to peruse. Travellers by this route will find it best to cross the Isthmus in parties of two, three, or four. Keeping aloof from all general arrangements, they will, on arrival at Chagres, engage a canoe alongside the ship large enough to land them with their baggage, which they will attend to in person. This plan will avoid the delay and confusion attending the general landing in boats and launches. Reaching what is called the American side of the river, opposite to Chagres, one or more can remain in charge of the baggage, while another of the party can select a canoe to ascend the river, in case there is no steamer. A canoe of the medium size, large enough to accommodate the party and their effects, will be chosen. Take care that it be clean and dry, and provided with a roof or bungo, impervious to sun or rain, with room for all to sit or sleep under. Make your bargain with the owner *at* the canoe, stipulating for three men, (a captain and *two* polesmen,) then take possession and *maintain it*, while one of the party goes before the alcalde and pays the *whole* amount agreed upon, taking a receipt in *Spanish*. Unless you pursue this course, the proprietor will not hesitate even to return your money and refuse the canoe, if he finds he can obtain a little more from others. Having completed arrangements as above, you will still be detained several hours, as neither solicitation or threats will avail to get the men to start, *unless* you promise them some *additional* reward to leave in half an hour. Two bottles of common Cogniac,

and some common cigars, should be laid in at Chagres for the use of your canoemen under their severe labor in poling up the river, and you will facilitate your progress by treating them kindly. Whether you propose to land at Gorgona or not, contract to be taken to Cruces. Start as early as possible, but not later than 5 p. m.; about ten or twelve miles above Chagres you will reach Gatun; if you are early in the day, you can land there for lunch or dinner, but if towards night avoid it; otherwise you will have trouble to induce your boatmen to tear themselves away from the fandango and aguardiente.

Proceeding ten or twelve miles further, you arrive at Dos-Hermanos, where you can obtain eggs, chocolate, and other refreshment. Piño-Blanco is the next point where refreshment may also be obtained. Palenquillá comes next in order—two-thirds of the way to Gorgona, and rather more than half way to Cruces. Above this point on the stream, are some powerful currents; and a little below San-Pablo there is a single ranche a short distance from the river, where supplies can also be had. After leaving there, do not land again till you reach Gorgona.

The Gorgona road is best in the *dry* season; and if there is not a great throng of passengers, it is well to depart thence to Panama. Otherwise it is better to continue up the river in your canoe to Cruces, which is about eight miles farther, and where, under *such circumstances*, mules will be obtained more readily, and at more reasonable prices, thus facilitating your progress. You will find two or three hotels or boarding-houses both at Gorgona and Cruces; and if in the *dry* season, you can rest with some satisfaction at either place for a day or two, until you obtain mules for your journey to Panama. *By no means attempt the Gorgona road in the*

rainy season. Avoid hiring the miserable little horses, but get mules if possible—one for the baggage of each person, and one each to ride if in rainy season; but in dry season, on the Gorgona road, one mule will answer for two persons to "ride and tie," or if you prefer it, two mules for three of the party. To walk part of the way will be found a great relief; but in the *regular* rainy season it is a risk to health, even if you are able to accomplish it; and above all things, in that climate *avoid over-fatigue.* Both on the Cruces and Gorgona roads, you will meet with houses of natives where rest and sometimes refreshment can be obtained, especially on the road from the former place; but I consider it far preferable to get an *early* start, and push through to Panama in one day, provided you find the fatigue endurable, which most persons in health can sustain. Let the pack-mules, attended by a native muleteer, *precede you*, and let *one* of the party always keep them in sight, or they will soon be turned off the road to some rancho in the mountains, involving a week's delay in their arrival at Panama, or the loss of baggage. Do not neglect to provide a small haversack, to contain provisions, a flask of best brandy, and a small *cocoa-nut cup* with a long twine attached, by which you can obtain water from the streams to quench your thirst, without dismounting. This cup you can buy of some of the natives at Chagres or other village on the river; but drink as little as possible, *especially* in the rainy season. In the contract for mules, stipulate to pay half the hire at your departure, and the remainder on arrival at your destination. If you should find prices very exorbitant, it may be better economy to purchase mules and sell them at end of the journey; but in this case the risk of losing the animal is incurred, as many break down on the way. For the same

reason, if a party of three or four travel in company, it is judicious to have an extra mule in your train.

Arrived at Panama, ascertain first when the steamer sails for San Francisco, registering your ticket at the same time; then obtain lodging at a hotel if you are to be detained only three or four days; but if for a week or more, get private lodgings, hiring a cook, and becoming your own caterers, or get meals at a restaurant. If hotels are established at Taboga, you will, of course, go to that island.

During detention at Panama, avoid midday sun, or exposure to rain, but take *moderate exercise.* If greatly fatigued, and not well, spunge the person with whiskey or spirits of some kind, bathe the feet in warm water, and retire to rest. *Do not resort to cold bath* when *fatigued*, or during *heat of the day.* During the *rainy* season mix with the water you drink a little brandy. It is best to *avoid all fruits entirely;* but if indulged in, let it be in moderation, and early in the morning. If you wish to *secure* the *immediate* payment of the amount insured to heirs or relatives on your life, eat freely of fruit and eggs *together*, and drink milk, or wash down plenty of fruit with brandy, or any kind of wine or liquor whatever. Three or four Peruvian bark pills every morning, are good preventives to fever, if predisposed to it. Take little medicine, and no advice from physicians not accustomed to practice in *tropical* climates. The following prescription is recorded by John H. Stephens, as having cured him of a violent attack of fever in Central America, viz.: "A decoction of the rind of the *sour orange*, flavored with cinnamon and lemon juice, a tumblerful warm every two hours, with copious draughts of tamarind water during the intervals." It was prescribed by a native.

On no account dispense with a flannel or merino under-

shirt; and if you never wore any, assume it now. Much of the foregoing may seem superfluous counsel, and to have emanated from a kind old ancestor of the female line; but it may, perhaps, enable some travellers by this route, to escape the doctors' hands, and forego the attention of a sexton—a difficult individual to discover in Panama even when wanted.

Lastly, I would advise any person to attempt to *swim* from Panama to San Francisco, rather than take passage in a *sailing* vessel. Get a *Pacific steamer's ticket*, before leaving New York, or do not attempt this route. For all your expenses on the Isthmus, *one hundred dollars* will be a safe estimate, though fifty may, perhaps, suffice, if there is no great crowd of travellers, and little detention at Panama. This sum should be in dimes, *eight* of which pass for a dollar in *all* payments to *natives*.

In conclusion, a *steerage* passenger from New York to San Francisco, by the Isthmus route, will require *three hundred dollars*, and a first-class *cabin* passenger *five hundred dollars;* unless the competition among the different lines should reduce prices materially, which, with the increasing emigration, is not to be anticipated.

Less sums than the above *may*, in some instances, suffice; but I recommend no person to make the experiment.

CHAPTER VII

Panama—Celebration of Washington's Birth-day—The Military and Governor's Band—Church of the Virgin—Streets of La Merced and San Juan de Dios—Shops—Cafes—and Fondas—Interior of the Houses—Plaza—Grand Cathedral—Church of Santa Anna—Priests—Observance of the Sabbath—Midnight Procession of the Host—Representation of Christ bearing the Cross.

PANAMA is a regular old Spanish town, containing from six to eight thousand inhabitants, at least one-half residing outside the walls. We arrived there on the 21st of February, and were aroused from our slumbers at an early hour of the following morning by the firing of guns and pistols, and clangor of drums and trumpets, mingled with shouts, cheers and hurrahs.

Hastening out on the balcony to ascertain the cause, a strange, picturesque and animated scene presented itself. Below us in every direction appeared in close proximity the red, glazed, tiled roofs of the city, the houses of stone or brick, two and three stories in height, covered with a coat or plaster or whitewashed, and invariably surrounded on each story with a wide balcony floored with the large, flat, square brick, and protected from sun and rain, by the roofs of the houses extending over them.

Intersecting them at right angles, the strait and narrow streets were filled with natives selling fruit, or lazily strolling toward the scene of uproar. Away in the distance beneath the

bright morning sun, shone the clear still surface of the bay, reflecting in dark contrast the shadows of its bold mountain isles, while the air was filled with thousands of buzzards on noiseless and almost motionless wing, or twittering martins restlessly flitting from ruined tower and wall.

In a few moments we heard the inspiring strains of Hail Columbia from a full military band, echoed from the rude pavement by the steady tramp of men; and the waving of the Star-spangled banner as the column passed the head of the street, assured us that our patriotic countrymen were appropriately celebrating the birthday of Washington. We had arrived too late on the previous evening to participate in the arrangements, and our fatigue had induced sleep till the morning was well advanced. The procession numbered three or four hundred Americans, and preceded by the Governor's band in full uniform, marched to his quarters and to the houses of the American and French Consuls, giving all in turn three cheers; after which our flag was unfurled, and saluted at the battery fronting the bay, and the festivities of the day were concluded by a dinner and grand concert at the American Hotel, in the evening.

The soldiers here are queer-looking specimens of the nucleus of an army. There are about seventy or at most a hundred, their uniform consisting of coarse, dirty, white linen pants, a shirt of the same, made *a la blouse* and worn outside, a blue cloth scull-cap, with red band in front, contrasting, *a la diable*, with their black faces; and bare feet with long toes complete the *tout ensemble.*

Shouldering their clumsy, condemned English muskets and bayonets—the latter suitable for a toad-sticker—they parade morning and evening in their barrack-yard, going through their evolutions with tolerable correctness, but still forcibly

reminding one of Jack Falstaff and his buckram warriors. These soldiers are employed as guards to the immense amounts of specie and bullion sent across the Isthmus, and in various similar duties within the town.

After witnesssing the celebration and parade of the morning, and partaking of our *café*, we sallied forth to explore this ancient town and port.

Entering by the principal or Gorgona gate from the northwest, the traveller is struck both by the solidity and substantial character of the buildings, and the evidences of disuse and dilapidation everywhere presented. Immediately within the walls, and fronting the gateway, is the church of the blessed Virgin, extending to the next street, with the ruins of monastery or convent attached. The church itself is in tolerable repair; its yellow, stuccoed front adorned with antique-looking towers, and niches filled with images of saints. The principal entrance is at the side, from the street of la Merced, and at the corner fronting the gateway, is an open porch or shrine, with an altar and picture of the Virgin Mary, and jewelled cross, enclosed in glass. Here the tired *cargodores, vaqueros,* and *aguadores* are accustomed to offer their devotions; and after a brief rest upon their weary limbs, resume their incessant labors. None ever pass here without lifting their *sombreros* or crossing themselves.

Commencing here, the *Calle de la Merced*, or street of mercy, or the Virgin, extends directly through the *plaza* to the gate opening upon the shores of the bay—a distance of about a quarter of a mile; in width, twenty-five to thirty feet, with an old cobble pavement and narrow flag-stone sidewalks, much worn and broken, or covered with grease enough to afford good sliding. This, the principal street of Panama, is quite similar to all the others. Parallel, and next to it, is

the street of *San Juan de Dios*, not so wide, but much neater in appearance, and attracting the notice of the stranger with it numerous and varied stores and shops.

With the exception of two or three warehouses of the more considerable merchants, who are chiefly located near the custom-house and mole, these shops are small, but filled with the greatest variety of wares, dry goods, hardware, and clothing, which is made by the industrious fingers of the *señoras* and *señoritas* who invariably attend the counters. Some of them, who are creoles, bordering on the pure Castilian, have pretensions to beauty, but generally the dusky or sallow complexion quite naturalizes the effect of their jet-black hair and eyes. Besides these shops, every street has its wine-stores and fruit-stalls—the former lined with fancifully-painted shelves, and filled from floor to ceiling with glasses and chinaware, and bottles of wines, cordial, cogniac, or *aguardiente*. The strong drink is consumed chiefly by the laboring people; but all classes drink much of the light cordials and claret wines. Rows of dusty and empty bottles, however, and shelves long bereft of merchandise, evidence the poverty or want of industry of many.

On the street of la Merced, under the quarters of the French Consul, is the French *café*, and nigh to this the California and United States restaurants—the two latter established since the influx of American travel by this route. At all of them we obtained tolerable good meals. The French chocolate, prepared here from the nut, and the Sandwich Island coffee, were particularly fine. The only hotels were the Fonda Americana, Washington House, and Hotel Française—the first and last tolerably well-kept, considering all things; the other only a lodging-house. After tarrying a week at the former, we became tired of life at a hotel, and

soon sought and obtained lodgings and a cook, at a respectable private house, becoming our own caterers.

We were so fortunate as to be received into the mansion of Señor Antonio Forns, a merchant of Havana, and of an ancient, wealthy, and highly-respectable Spanish family of Old Panama. To this gentleman's politeness and kind attentions, combined with his perfect knowledge of our language, were we especially indebted for many comforts and advantages while under his roof; and would advise our countrymen who are provided with proper credentials, to seek admission to his quarters, over the Jardin Italiano, in the street of la Merced.

The interior of the houses here are admirably adapted for comfort in this climate. They are mostly thirty to forty feet square, and often larger—the walls two or three feet thick, and provided with ornamental loop-holes to admit the external air—the floors of the upper stories composed of slabs of the bay-tree, or paved with brick laid on rafters of this tree, which is very strong and lasting. These stories are used as the residence of the family; and divided into large apartments, the partitions not reaching to the ceiling or roof, permit free ventilation, which is further aided by wide stairways and folding-doors, with windows cut in them opening on the balconies. Thus, with the impervious-tiled roof, as much comfort is ensured as is possible in a tropical climate. The ground-floor is occupied by a shop of some kind, and a wide, stone-paved hall, from whence the ample stone or mahogany staircase ascends to the family apartments. A wide court-yard, provided with well or cistern, and some few large trees, completes the description of a Panama house.

The *plaza*, or open common, (for it is neither more nor less,) is worthy of notice only as a distinctive feature in a

Spanish town, and is not to be named in comparison with any of the public squares of our large cities. Covered with sparse grass, it is a general play-ground for the children, who, instead of jeering and annoying poor cripples, or other pitiable objects of humanity, as in our own free country, are contented with the antics of a favorite dog, or to war with a belligerent goat.

Fronting on the *plaza*, is a seminary of learning, the old legislative hall, with its long row of short stone pillars, and New Grenadian coat-of-arms, and the great Cathedral.

The latter is an interesting relic of Panama in its palmy days; and though stripped by the old Spaniards of its principal paintings, jewels, and ornaments, in 1823, (the time of the revolution and triumph of Bolivar,) enough of the original structure yet remains to convey an idea of the superior energy of its founders. It is apparently one hundred and fifty feet in length, by fifty in breadth. The façade, though marred by the ravages of time, is venerable on that account, and quite imposing. Two massive square towers rear their solid structures from the foundation walls, terminating with conical spires, which are coated with stucco and spangled with large pearl shells, affording a most beautiful effect in the bright rays of the sun or mellow light of the moon. Surmounted each by a cross, and provided with a good clock, and chime of bells from cracked to musical, these towers are worthy objects of pride to all devout and good citizens. Between them, and over the great entrance, are figures in stone of Christ and the twelve apostles, rather the worse for wear from the floods of the rainy season, in spite of the niches provided for them. Below these are the three great doorways, the centre one being arched and highly ornamented, and all approached by a grand double flight of stone steps.

There is, also, a wide doorway and similar ascent on the side, from the street of la Merced.

The architecture of the interior is, however, more effective. The central nave is apparently eighty feet high, with an open mahogany roof, and on each side a double row of thirty-two immense quadrangular columns, with arches between. The high altar is quite a fine affair, with saints innumerable, and over the crucifix a large silver stork presides with her young. There are also other altars and shrines to various saints, with pictures of the Crucifixion, Last Supper, Madonna, &c. Over one of these we saw what we supposed to be the figure of an Indian clinging to a tree, with an arrow transfixed through the heart, and one through each arm. Still above this appeared a figure like St. George standing over the dragon, with helmet, sword, and shield, but no steed. This we imagined to be "good ould Saint Pathrick" killing the father of serpents, and the other some canonized Indian deity. If wrong in these surmises, we trust the good and indulgent *padres* will attribute it to the ignorance of depraved heretics, which, so far as their system is concerned, we acknowledge ourselves to be.

Near the altar the pavement is covered with tombstones of *padres* and great folks. One, to the memory of a pious señora, we observed, was embellished with the figures of an angel opening the gate of heaven, and a lady weeping at the tomb; and another was of beautiful Parian marble, in the form of the cross, with an inscription. By the side of the principal entrance were also the usual white marble fonts of holy water, resorted to by all the faithful, and filled with the little insects dropped from the dirty sleeves of devotees. Two or three small and inferior organs supplied the music.

Outside the walls of the town and near the Gorgona gate is

also the Church of Santa Anna. It is even larger than the Cathedral, and though of its great towers one only remains perfect, its appearance is quite grand and beautiful, especially when seen in bold relief against the evening sky, its gray walls and lonely tower gorgeous in the crimson light of the setting sun, while the deep notes of the vesper bell are returned in plaintive echo from the neighboring hill.

There are many other inferior churches both within and without the walls, so that as usual in Roman Catholic countries the church bells are perpetually tolling, ringing or clanging; chiefly the latter, however, in Panama, as they are mostly rung by being pounded with a cobble stone and are thus often cracked. This abundance of churches also affords food and idleness to *padres* and priests innumerable, so that a large body of men are interested in extending the system as far as possible, and in the multiplication of ceremonies and observances.

The same plan is pursued among Protestants as well as Roman Catholics in our own land, where church edifices are built with money borrowed or begged. Debts are thus bequeathed to posterity, and the continual appeals from such sources for aid might put O'Connell to the blush.

The Sabbath is observed in Panama as in all Spanish cities. After attending early or morning mass, all classes turn out for amusements. The military and governor's band parade twice, the shops and billiard rooms are open, and it is the great day allowed by law for cock-fighting. We attended church service at the residence of the American consul, following the dictates of conscience or of home custom, as the case might be, which is exactly what most of the world do. Every Sunday morning, at two or three o'clock, the host is carried in procession through the streets. It was a strange

sight to us, to behold the crucifix hung not only with the image of Christ but with cords and elegant tapestry; was it so on Calvary? Carried by priests in white robes, and followed by a band of musicians and many more priests all in white, chanting in full chorus and unearthly tones, the ghostly train swept by. From every door and window issued half-clad devotees to kneel and repeat their prayers in moonlight or shadow, while over all the impressive scene "the heavens declare the glory of God," and the eternal stars shed their bright lustre both "on the just and the unjust."

Processions are also frequent here on the days of the week. One evening we joined a crowd of our countrymen, and followed a procession bearing on a platform carried by four natives, a figure of Christ as large as life, dressed in a robe of purple velvet and crowned with thorns, bending under the weight of a large wooden cross. Tin lanterns, with six or eight tallow candles were stuck around it, and the top of the cross was adorned with a beautiful bouquet of flowers. There were few priests, but crowds of women and children followed close. As they neared the Cathedral door they all halted and gathered around, kneeling devoutly, while the priest with knees on the bare pavement selecting a *clean place*, repeated his prayers and invocations. Meantime we observed the fellows who carried the show had a talk and flirtation with the wenches nearest them. Resuming the march, we took off our hats and entered the Cathedral with them. Here they repeated the litany in a mixture of bad Latin and corrupt Spanish, the women and children, (the wicked men are too often absent on these occasions,) kneeling on the pavement of the church, joined with much fervor in the responses, elevating and extending their arms and outstretched hands towards the image. To their ignorant hearts it was true devotion,

and side by side the rich and poor kneeled together, prevented neither by glittering robe nor tattered rag, by costly pew nor haughty pride; for "dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," was not forgotten here.

CHAPTER VIII.

Beautiful Ruins—Church of San Domingo and San Felipe—College of Jesuits—Old Monasteries and Nunnery—Convent of the Concepcion—Battery and Barracks—Arsenal and Hospital—Cockpit and Circus—Oriental Bath—The Sea Shore—Rapid Rise of the Tide—Shells—Soldier Crabs—Eclipse of the Moon—Serenade.

PANAMA abounds with ruins of the most diversified and beautiful description. The most perfect of these is the Church of San Domingo. Situated on one of the inferior streets near the bay, it frequently escapes the notice of strangers. Entering by a small opening, left in the wooden enclosure of the great doorway, we were at once in the body of the church. The walls appear almost entire, the mortar being hard as the stone itself, but no vestige of tower or roof remains. The arches are quite unbroken and perfect, stretching from side to side in bold and massive beauty. One of them especially attracted our admiration, being nearly level at the key-stone, and showing the intimate knowledge of its constructors with the principles of their art. At the east end were the remains of chancel, altar, and vestry, and the whole interior is filled with beautiful trees and shrubbery, with every variety of creeping vine, climbing gracefully over arch and pillar, and mouldering wall. Near the west end hangs three antique-looking old bells on rude cross timbers. These are of different sizes and of various and most delicious tones. They bear date 1761, and the inscription *Francisco de Leon, N. del Rosario ora pro nobis.* Passing through a door opposite to the one by which we entered, we found our-

selves in a quadrangular court overgrown with trees, and surrounded on three sides by the remains of a large monastery or nunnery. The inner walls remain, as also the pedestals of the columns in front of them. Adjoining the ruined church is a private stone staircase, leading to a small, square door in the wall of the convent, which perhaps could many a tale unfold. Strewed about the court were earthen vessels shaped like those in Eastern countries, and we obtained from one of them letters stamped in a circle, resembling the Arabic or Moorish characters.

On our return here we found a beautiful little chapel of the convent, still preserved and in use, called San Felipe, and adorned with massive silver-framed oil paintings of the Madonna and the Crucifixion, and large chandeliers also of solid silver.

We also visited the ruins of the College of Jesuits which cover a large extent. There was no perceptible mode of admission, but clambering to the top of the wall where it is lowest, we found the interior filled with trees and vines, and obtained some of the bolls of a wild cotton plant. Cocoa-trees and the palmetto were also displaying their grateful tops above the walls. This building it is said was never completed.

Standing immediately on the shores of the bay, are the remains of two old monasteries of immense size. Of these the walls and old bells only remain, but close at hand are the ruins of an old Spanish convent covering a whole square. A portion of the roof and the towers are yet to be seen, with the old bells swinging sentinels over all, where once their matin tones aroused the young and beautiful to prayer, now voiceless and hushed as they. Near this is the Convent of the Concepcion, where a few nuns yet reside. We visited it afterwards in company with an American lady, but were only ad-

mitted to the outer court. By the aid of a wooden wheel revolving horizontally, they supplied us with tumblers of pure and sparkling water, and a boquet of most rare, beautiful, and fragrant flowers. They refused any remuneration for their kindness, but seemed much delighted with the beauty of our fair companion, promising to admit her on a following day.

"But I won't be a nun, no I shan't be a nun,
" I'm so fond of pleasure that I cannot be a nun."

Seeing only the flash of their brilliant black eyes through a knot hole in the wheel, we imagined ourselves transferred to the famed Alhambra, and were fain to enter there, but imitating the example of irresistible mother Eve, our "fair ladye" drove us out of Paradise. A favorite walk with strangers while tarrying in Panama, is on the East Battery fronting the bay. Stretching away to the south-east, some four hundred yards in length, forty feet in width and fifty feet above high-water mark, it presents a frowning battlement of solid masonry, in which are still remaining some fine old brass cannon of large calibre, bearing the arms of Hispaniola, and dated Seville, 1745 and 1777, also a brass mortar inscribed Barcelona, Phillip V. By the ruined watch tower on the wall, these relics of the olden time look out upon the sea, and like the once powerful nation whose arms they bear, behold the tide of commerce and civilization sweeping onward, bestowing wealth, power and refinement on a nation whose infancy was scarce inscribed in history, ere its republican fires destroyed the last remnant of monarchical tyranny on both continents of the New World.

The view of the bay and town from this battery is remarkably fine. The gorgeous sunset of the tropics crowning the distant mountains with a blaze of glory, and covering the

green islands with a robe of crimson and orange; or after a brief interval, the gray light of the twinkling stars and bright effulgence of the rising moon, reflected from the gleaming waters at our feet, or falling with mellow light on spire, roof, and balcony, afford a scene which the heart of an artist might well delight in, but which his pencil can ne'er portray.

The barracks of the military and their parade immediately in rear of this battery, are always provided with groups of lounging, lazy and dirty soldiers.

Visiting the arsenal and military hospital on the street of San Juan de Dios, we were encountered at the door by these rascals, with rusty muskets, crying *cigaros, cigaros, señores*, a few of which we bestowed, to their great delight. Ascending the ricketty stairs from a musty old courtyard, we were admitted by another sentry with a similar password into a large apartment, on a platform in the centre of which was a score or more of soldiers of all colors, from jet black, up to saffron-yellow, or white livered. They were employed in weaving straw hats, which they eagerly offered us for sale. Those denominated Panama hats by us are here called Guayaquil, and are made at Monte Cristo, San Juan, and San Helano on that coast. We found these military hatters hard at a bargain, and were proceeding to the further end of the room in quest of more liberal dealers, when they tried to stop us, crying *mucho infirmo, mucho infirmo, señor.** Taking this to be a mere ruse, we persevered, and there found sure enough several poor fellows yellow with Panama fever. We therefore beat a retreat, and as day after day, we saw the soldiers bearing a rude wooden coffin out of the Gorgona gate, wondered which of these whilom warriors had received his final discharge from the ranks of the living.

* Bad Spanish, for very sick, very sick, sir.

While musing over one of these scenes, we noticed a crowd of natives wending their way up a sort of causeway just within the walls, towards a small building half in ruins. As several of them carried their feathered champions under their arms, we knew directly that cock-fighting was the order of the day; and accordingly joined the rush. The interior is rudely fitted with seats against the old walls, rising in the form of an ampitheatre, a circular space of hard-beaten ground being left for the sport. The preliminary scenes here are of the most ludicrous description. A crowd of *the fancy* darkies and creoles shuffling and pushing about the ring, chattering like monkeys and gesticulating like ourang-outangs, discuss with the utmost rage and violence the merits of the different birds. Others are engaged in fixing on the murderous steel gaffs, while betting and hedging run high. At one side hangs a rusty old bell, which is used as a signal to clear the ring. After a long delay in completing the final arrangements, during which the woolly tribe often get into a fight in place of the feathered; the bell is struck impatiently, the enraged birds are placed opposite to each other, held by the several owners, while the one which is intended by the gambling knaves to win, has most of his tail feathers plucked violently out. Then comes a furious onset, the birds frequently leaping clear over one another, but in a few seconds blood spirts from second joint or neck, and the wounded hero falls. Screams, yells, and shouts of derision now burst forth; but in a moment all is still; for the floored combatant suddenly rises, and quick as lightning lays low his antagonist. When this happens, the excitement of the crowd becomes furious, and they watch with the greatest eagerness for the last gasp of either bird, the survivor being immediately declared the winner: but it more commonly happens that one or other

of them is killed at the first onset. Then comes the payment of losses and preparation for another bout. This amusement appeared to us cruel, disgusting, and puerile, but is, nevertheless, the grand entertainment among these people. They also had, at the time of our visit, a circus company, which performed on Sunday evenings within the ruins of a fine old church adjoining the College of Jesuits. It was much frequented, but we did not go there.

Wandering one beautiful Sunday morning towards a favorite haunt amidst the lonely yet eloquent ruins, our attention was drawn to the attractive word *baths*, on a sign above an old gateway. Entering immediately, we found ourselves in a large court-yard, in which were three or four bamboo huts, or rather booths. Ushered into one of these, a coarse towel, comb, and soap were handed, and the curtain dropped. Within were three high oriental-shaped jars, containing each a half-barrel or more of water clear as crystal, and provided with wooden cover and calabash—the latter to be used in place of a shower-bath. There was a rough brick floor to stand upon with bare feet, and on one side a rude bench to receive clothing. Not relishing the rough floor, we succeeded in standing upright within the jar, though the bottom was so small as only to permit one foot to rest on the other. The soap used is made partly with a plant or root similar to that of California; and either its properties are extraordinary, or we had lost our power of comparison between ourselves and the dusky natives around us. While engaged in these delightful ablutions, we cast frequent glances through the bamboo sides of our modest retreat, fearing some young Señorita might linger in the grove to lave in turn her own fair form, or rather twilight skin. But in this, alas! we were not so fortunate or rather unfortunate as one of our *compañeros*, who

on a prior occasion was forced to hasten from the garden, driven out by the impatient glances of one of these waiting daughters of Eve. This oriental style of bathing was afterwards much resorted to, and the attentive *hombre*, the proprietor, no doubt collected many riales.

The sea shore was a favorite walk in the cool of the morning and evening, but we did not often venture to bathe, as in these latitudes sharks are both numerous and daring. The tide, which rises and falls the extraordinary height of twenty-two feet, presented an imposing sight, when the flood making with a stiff breeze, the great combers came roaring and foaming up the beach with wonderful rapidity. The shore directly in front of the city is flat, but composed of hard volcanic rock, while on either side it is yellow or black sand beach. The tide, when at full flood in stormy weather, dashes against the high wall of the east battery with great violence, throwing the spray far above it. In our strolls along the sandy beach, we gathered many small shells of great variety, and some quite beautiful. The best time for this amusement was on a rising tide, when intent on securing some attractive shell, we often got caught by the waves, and had a grand scramble to reach dry land.

We observed similar performances too by the little land crabs, called soldier crabs, which abound on the shore, living in holes, and feeding on the animalculæ of the tide. Some of these were quite large, and of a bright red color, from which, with their belligerent attitude when approached, they, no doubt, derive their name. The sand is marked all over with their claws, and when overtaken by the tide on the smooth rocks, they hold on with these until the wave recedes, when they scramble off as nimbly as possible.

Resting on the cool balcony after one of these rambles, we

watched the evening shadows falling fast from tower and isle over city and bay, while busy memory was far away by the side of our own loved hearthstones in a wintry clime, when our attention was recalled by the sombre gloom settling gradually and strangely upon surrounding objects. Remembering at once the expected eclipse of the moon, we hurried forth to observe its effects among the ruins. Amidst the fading shadows of broken column and crumbling arch, the dim forms of tall and venerable trees seemed like the ghosts of old padre or stalwart knight, returned to gaze once more on the well-known scenes of a past century, their strong arms held aloft in deprecatory amazement, while the low night wind sighed the requiem of the olden time. Huge vines crept away over the dark and dismal walls, like the serpent of old deserting the desolation of the once bright abode. Silence, disturbed only by the rustling leaf or flitting bat, reigned supreme, where once the vaulted roof or marble floor echoed with the sound of mailed foot or pealing organ. Altogether the scene was one not soon to be forgotton; and retiring to repose for the night, we were only aroused for a moment from our dreams by a serenade of the most delicious music under the balcony, when pleasant thoughts of far off homes rose up to blend with returning slumber.

CHAPTER IX.

Scenes and Incidents—The American Press—Arrival of American Ladies—A Panama Swell—Costume of the Women—Panama Chains and Pearls—Ancient Bracelets—Loss and Recovery of Baggage—Game—Rows with the Natives—Chain Gangs—Paganini and his Band—Lessons in Spanish—Markets—Yams—Delicious Shell Fish—Agua Marba—Roast Monkey—Private Lodgings and Mode of Living.

NOTWITHSTANDING the many objects of interest in and about Panama, our delay there when en route for the El Dorado would have grown somewhat tedious, but for the new and agreeable scenes and incidents continually presenting themselves.

Imitating the enterprising example of our countrymen in Mexico, a small weekly newspaper called the Panama Star was early established to furnish information or amusement to our people sojourning here, as well as to those at home. This, we believe, was the first effort of the American press on the southern continent, but so great is the anxiety of the people of New Grenada to cultivate friendly relations with us, and acquire our language, that we hope an American newspaper will in due time be permanently established among them.

Of all American novelties, however, presented to the New Grenadians, none seemed to afford them more surprise and gratification than the arrival of some of our fair countrywomen. We had the pleasure of seeing two of these persever-

ing and heroic ladies enter the Gorgona gate in health and safety, one of them mounted on a fine mule, holding her little boy before her, the other carried in a hammock *a la palanquin*. We received them with three hearty cheers, which they gracefully acknowledged. How little will the hardship and fatigue which they endured be appreciated by those who in a few years will be whirled across the Isthmus by railway in two or three hours.

Standing in the crowd of natives and Americans, we observed a tip top dandy, or regular Panama swell. He was dressed with loose gay linen pants, yellow leather or buckskin zapatos or shoes, Monte Cristo sombrero, and a curious-looking linen coat called a brusa, known among us under the soubriquet of bruiser. It is something between a shirt and a blouse, usually made of plaid linen, with ample sleeves, wristbands, and collar like a shirt, having wide band across the shoulders to which the full skirt is gathered, and open in front with pocket in each corner. Exceedingly comfortable in a hot climate, it is nevertheless quite comical in appearance.

The costume of the women of Panama especially attracted our attention. Although appropriate enough to the climate, it was rather different from our preconceived ideas of modesty and propriety. A white petticoat, or with the better classes, a black silk one, descends from the short waist; above this a loose chemise ascends unwillingly, or rather hangs provokingly from the short-sleeved shoulder. Cut very low in the back, it is usually surrounded with common fringe, or sometimes rich, deep lace; this, with slipper down at the heel, or neat, black morocco shoe and white stockings completes the in-door attire. When dressed for mass or circus, the hair is neatly plaited and set off with pearls or rude golden orna-

ments; and the indispensable white lace mantilla, or *rebozo*, hangs gracefully from the back of the head, or is allowed to drop carelessly from the shoulder. This dress being universal we soon became accustomed to it. The style of dress among our fashionable belles we fear cannot plead adaptation to the climate, like that of Panama. What would the modestly-attired daughters of the Celestial Empire say to the beautiful barbarians of America. The well-worn motto of "honi soit qui mal y pense" we fear is too much relied on in these latter days.

Among the most conspicuous of the ornaments sometimes worn by the ladies of New Grenada are the celebrated Panama chains. Of the purest gold obtained in the country, and called *Choco* gold, these chains are made with combined delicacy and strength, frosted and colored with a peculiar yellow tinge, different from any other species of jewelry, and much admired. They are also adorned with a pendant of several large and beautiful pearls set in gold. These pearls are found in great abundance, and of large size, off the shores of the numerous islands in the bay of Panama, but the finest ones are obtained from the Isla del Rey, some thirty or forty miles out. Some are very perfect and of an egg or pear shape, and are often brought to the city by the poor divers who obtain them, and sold for a mere song. Many small and imperfect ones, or others partially cut from the shells in fanciful shapes, were disposed of for a few riales each. Cornelians and agates are also found here, and obtained very cheap of the different jewelers, whose shops, by the way, appear more like tinkers' shops and their instruments of labor of the rudest description. Among other curiosities which we saw, our polite host showed us a most curious pair of antique bracelets, made doubtless in Old Spain, more than three hun-

dred years ago. He told us they had been in his family since the settlement of old Panama. They were of a rude net work, and weighed half a pound each of pure gold. We concluded it would neither be advisable nor safe, to allow one of our American ladies to box our ears with such a bracelet upon her wrist, as none but a steel-clad knight could withstand her.

Among the most important but not always agreeable of our occupations while in Panama, was mounting watch at the Gorgona gate, or Hotel Française, for the arrival of our different articles of baggage. Many ludicrous scenes, however, rewarded our patience, as the moment any poor cargadore or staggering mule made his appearance within the gate, there was a general rush to examine or claim the various packages. This would often bring a poor lean little horse upon his knees, or induce a cargadore after a violent jabbering to consider his pilgrimage over and allow his heavy load to be deposited with the owner.

One of our party, like many others, had been anxiously watching nearly a week for a leather bag which contained numerous articles and papers of importance to him. To expedite its transmission and ensure its safety also, he had employed a fellow at Gorgona named Manuel Gomez. Paying him an extra price, and taking his receipt, he beheld him start for Panama, trotting off cheerily ahead of his mule. But, lo! this was the last of Master Manuel for many a day. Enquiring of every newly-arrived cargadore or muleteer, all knew Manuel Gomez; "*Si, si, Señor mañana,*" meaning that he would arrive to-morrow, but though to-morrow surely came no Manuel came with it.

Thus mounting guard on the city walls one day "in quest of adventures," who should we espy in the midst of a

crowd, but the identical Manuel Gomez himself; but unfortunately for him he was not at that moment in *propria persona*, being a Bacchante, or in vulgar parlance gloriously drunk. Mingling at once in the circle of his admirers, the blackamoor's conscience at sight of us did cause his vagabond senses to return to the aid of his now trembling limbs. With the dread of the police before his eyes he begged for mercy, and explained that having confided the bag to another *hombre*, who was out at the old stone bridge, he could not recover it from him without more *riales*, of which himself was minus. A true and ready friend from the land of the claymore and kilt, volunteered to accompany the slippery Manuel and obtain the property or thrash the rogue, on behalf of the owner who was suffering with severe indisposition. Arriving at the bridge, sure enough, there was the darkey, bag and all. Paying him the four riales demanded, the rascally Manuel made a grab at the funds, and obtaining part both held on to the bag. Whereupon *auld reekie* tappit them on their crowns, producing immediate resignation. Now Master Manuel offered to carry the bag to the hotel in the town for *dos riales*, which was accordingly promised him, but when the "shrewd operator" arrived at his final destination, he had the audacity to demand twelve riales more, which the party interested immediately settled by whacking the scamp from top to bottom of the stairs. Thus vanished the redoubtable Manuel pale as a ghost to the land of *spirits*, where no doubt he quickly forgot the world and its troubles. Similar rows with the natives were not unusual, when their pockets were well-filled with the riales of the Americans, and their heads proportionately stored with aguardiente.

We saw another instance of this kind one day in the street of La Merced. One of our people who had been on a hunt-

ing and shooting expedition, in quest of the small red deer, which are numerous, or of the wild pigeons which abound in the neighboring mountains, being unsuccessful in obtaining the former, had purchased a young fawn of a native who killed it, and employed him to carry it to his lodgings. Some one, however, offered the fellow a higher price than he obtained, whereat he at once claimed the game as his own property, and throwing it down in the street, refused to proceed farther. Our Yankee friend drew his bowie-knife to intimidate him; but he was too cunning for that, and retorted by handling his own knife, whereat the American quietly replaced his in his belt, and then deliberately knocked our belligerent *hombre* down, aiding his rapid rise by a kick. This *argumentum ad hominem* he perfectly understood, and nimbly picking up the game, trotted off in the required direction.

The natives, however, are generally honest, as the smallest thefts are punished with long imprisonment; and although some trunks were lost or rifled on the Isthmus, yet, among the vast number transported in safety, this was not surprising, especially considering also the carelessness of the owners.

Other and higher crimes are of rare occurrence, and are punished by placing the criminals in chain gangs. We saw some forty or fifty of these in all, going about the streets, carrying garbage and mending pavement. They are linked two and two by the leg and ankle, with strong iron chains, which are not very heavy. They are always accompanied by sentinels to make them work and preclude escape: their arms and hands are free, and they appeared to walk without great difficulty. At first, the continual clank, clank, of their chains conveyed unpleasant feelings; but when we compare their easy existence in the free air of heaven, and in sight of their

families, it is far less painful than the solitary confinement of our penitentiaries. The ignominy, no doubt, constitutes the chief punishment; for we never saw any of the natives notice or speak to them.

While we were at the Fonda Americano, a band of nine musicians played one, and sometimes two evenings each week, using the large square hall for their concert room, which, by the liberality of the landlord, was free to all.

They performed opera music, overtures, polkas, waltzes, marches, &c., of the best modern composers, and all in the most perfect style. They were mostly negroes and two or three creoles.

Their leader, a negro, with woolly moustache, they called Paganini; and he was, in truth, one of the best violinists we ever heard. One of them played a common, single-keyed German flute like Kyle. They always played at the beginning and close of their performances our national airs, "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle," which were enthusiastically cheered with the regular American hurrah. As an evidence of our high appreciation of their skill, we employed them one lovely evening to serenade the Governor, our consul Mr. Nelson, and the American ladies in town.

Passing, in one of our walks, a large house which had apparently been the residence in palmier days of an old Spanish grandee, we heard a loud buzz of voices, and looking in beheld row after row of small and mischievous-looking boys busily engaged at their studies and tricks. The sight was a pleasant one, as well as comical, and had the good effect to induce us forthwith to obtain a Spanish primer, and commence the study of the language. This we found to be the best mode to obtain a perfect idea of the pronunciation, and, of course, the orthography; and brief as was our *schooling*,

we were impressed with the opinion, that the best way to acquire any foreign language, is to learn it as we learn our own —from the *alphabet* and the *primer*—and not by plunging at once into the grammar, though we are also quite ready to confess our general imperfect knowledge of the latter.

Early one morning we wended our way to the market, which is situated immediately upon the mole. Here we found a noisy, jabbering, and dirty crowd of black women, and creoles of both sexes—the former not so notable for their rotundity as those of our more favored land. They had the usual immense variety of tropical fruits, especially bananas, mangoes, tamarinds, and yams—the latter a very fine vegetable, and the potato of this climate, though, in our opinion, quite superior to that watery and common esculent. The yam seems to be almost pure farina, and served up in the style of American cookery would be a universal favorite, making, with the addition of a little flour, the finest bread. We saw, also, a great variety of fish, some very fine; and a species of salmon, weighing fifteen pounds, we had on our table. They showed us some very large oysters, which, when cooked, tasted and looked more like our long clams; and we obtained some of a species of minute and beautiful shell-fish, not larger than one's finger-nail, which were very delicious.

The countrywomen gather a species of herb, which they dry and prepare a tea from, which they call *agua marba*, very agreeable to the taste, and quite a good substitute for our Chinese beverage.

Much to our horror and surprise, we found, too, that the natives eat monkeys, and are very fond of them. A roast monkey was set before some of our people, who had curiosity enough to taste it; but we had been too often in a menagerie for that, and felt that in this case *ignorance was bliss*.

Returning to our lodgings after these excursions, well laden with sundry good things of this life, we indulged our appetites *a la Americano*, calling lustily on our lazy cook, Manuella, for coffee to begin with. But this extraordinary procedure bewildered her for a whole day; and we were almost ready, in despair, to conform to her Panama modes and customs, of coffee at seven o'clock, breakfast at ten, and dinner at four, having but one dish before us at a time, and coffee always last.

Our lodgings were remarkably comfortable, being provided with chairs, tables, sofas, and glass chandeliers, all of which, barring the chairs, were extra luxuries in Panama. Our nightly bivouac upon the boards, was a funny scene. First, *shaking up* the boards, we spread out our tents, and rolling up in our camp blankets, lay out in rows, provided with boots and pilot coats for pillows. Then, sure that we could not fall out of bed, and that the curtains would not cause us to oversleep, we forgot the matter-of-fact world in dreams of El Dorado, till the sound of the matin-bell calling the faithful to prayer, aroused us to turn out, stow hammocks, and clear the decks for breakfast.

CHAPTER X.

New Grenada—Ruins of Old Panama—Past and Present Condition and Future Prospects of the New City—Proposed Railroad—Importance of Docks—Climate and Natural Resources of the Isthmus—The Treaty with New Grenada—Our late Charge des Affairs—Characters, Manners, and Customs of the People.

History informs us that New Grenada was conquered, and annexed to the crown of Spain, by Gonzala de Ximenes, in 1536, who overthrew Bogota, the native king, a redoubtable chieftain, in honor of whom the capital of that name is called.

Seven miles from the existing city of Panama are the ruins of Old Panama. Founded by the Spaniards in the early part of the sixteenth century, and famous as the port from which Pizarro sailed in 1525, on his first expedition to Peru; it was sacked and burned by bucaniers in 1670, under a famous chieftain named Morgan. From this calamity it never recovered; and there is now only to be seen the remains of crumbling walls overgown with trees, and a few houses of the natives.

Returning to the present city, we are impressed with the resources, munificence, and enterprise of its founders.

Its massive and high walls, its fortifications and defences, numerous large churches and other public buildings, as well as substantial private edifices, erected from a species of stone

brought from a long distance: all attest the truth of the foregoing observations.

As long as Mexico, New Grenada, and other South American states remained subject to the crown of Spain, the whole of their commerce in obedience to her enactments, passed by the way of the Isthmus to the mother country and the world. Thus Panama became the principal commercial port of the Pacific, and the mart of the whole west coast of South America and Mexico. But her glory departed the moment that trade and commerce left to their natural channels attained a comparative degree of freedom, and flowed into immediate and direct communication with other countries.

While under this state of things, one generation has passed away—a new and longer day of prosperity is now apparently dawning on the next. The hope and expectation of the the whole civilized world, long directed to the Isthmus route as the great highway of nations, are, at length, soon to be gratified. And with just pride and exaltation do we point to its final accomplishment, by the enterprise and energy of the people of our Great Western Republic; thus adding another bright and enduring record to the volume of American history. Though both the Isthmus of Panama and that of Darien had been surveyed many years ago by the English, French, and Spanish goverments or capitalists, and the route by the former Isthmus ascertained to be entirely feasible for a railroad, and although especially England and the English eternally boast that theirs is the strongest government and wealthiest nation on earth, yet has it remained for their more powerful political and commercial rival to open new portals to her Indian empire and China trade.

Thus by our superior enterprise, as well as by our *peaceful*

annexation of Texas in the West, compared with her forcible and *bloody annexation* of the Punjaub in the East, let us assure the world, that we have not only outstripped our Anglo-Saxon parentage in the race of civilization, but that if the "sun never sets" on England's boasted possessions, neither will it ever again rise upon her commercial or political supremacy.

Crossing the Isthmus, both during the progress of the American survey and after its completion, we had every opportunity of observing the route selected for the proposed railroad, and cannot doubt its certain and speedy construction. The chief difficulty to contend with will be the floods of the rainy season, and their effect upon the viaducts and embankments; competent engineers will, however, overcome this.

This great undertaking once accomplished, Panama must not only resume her former position, but become one of the chief commercial cities of the western hemisphere. Her magnificent bay, salubrious climate, and fertile surrounding country, afford her every desired advantage. Capital, it is true, must and will be freely employed, in the construction of docks rendered necessary by the great rise and fall of the tides, but this improvement may, with others of similar importance, be accomplished with comparative ease. The smooth stone beach on the most accessible front of the city, will afford a solid foundation for the work, while abundance of the best material may be obtained from the old walls and numerous ruins.

There is also every facility for the establishment of large commercial houses. Fine, substantial buildings, suitable for warehouses, many of them entirely fire-proof, and now quite unoccupied, may be obtained at extremely low prices. Much of this species of property, and especially of the old ruins, belongs to the Roman Catholic Church; but as their poverty is,

notwithstanding, great, moderate prices would be gladly accepted by them. As an instance, however, of the effect of the American emigration upon the value of real estate, a large and fine building is now occupied as a hotel at an annual rent of three hundred dollars, which could have been purchased a few months ago for one thousand dollars. A corresponding advance on property in general has, nevertheless, not taken place.

As to the climate of Panama, and the country immediately surrounding it, there can be none in the world more delightful than it is in the dry season. The morning is always beautiful and clear, with a fine air from the sea, the thermometer during the hottest part of the day 80 to 85 degrees of Fahrenheit, relieved by a refreshing land breeze, which usually sets in about noon, continuing till sunset, followed by nights cool and comfortable. This continues about four months from the beginning of the year, when the rainy season approaches and sets in very gradually, attaining its height only during the latter four months of the year. Its intensity here is not near so considerable as on the other side of the Isthmus; and although it rains every day for at least four months, yet the afternoons are usually clear and pleasant. The atmosphere is of course sultry during this season, but to preserve the health, it is only necessary to keep the feet and person dry, and avoid too much fruit at all seasons.

The much-talked-of Panama fever is simply a common form of bilious fever, brought on generally by over-fatigue, or too great exposure to sun or rain. Dysentery also results from imprudence in diet, as in any other tropical climate. The yellow fever, or *black vomito*, never prevails, and the *Asiatic* cholera as an epidemic was unknown there until the present year; which is likewise the fact with all, or nearly all, the

seaports on the Pacific. True, the native physicians denominate the Panama fever as yellow fever, but to our inquiries on the subject, replied that they never knew a case of the *black vomito*. Sporadic cases of cholera have occurred; but it generally avoided the Pacific coast during its epidemical prevalence in 1832. No better proof of the healthfulness of the climate can be given, than the general exemption from illness of the 5000 Americans who have already tarried there, in the wet and the dry season.

In addition to the salubrious and healthy climate, the surrounding country is literally a paradise, and indeed the whole extent of the Isthmus affords abundant evidence of wonderful natural resources. Covered with a magnificent growth of forest trees, much of which is suitable for ship building as well as for other purposes, the soil is also exuberant for every species of cultivation. We saw, besides, the greatest abundance of every kind of fruit, Indian corn many feet high in the stalk, and sugar cane growing spontaneously from year to year, without exhausting the soil. Hemp, cotton and tobacco, may also be grown in the greatest luxuriance, the planter dreading no frost, and having reference only to the wet and dry seasons, while the marshes of the Chagres and Rio Grande rivers would produce the finest rice. Gold is also found in great purity in parts of New Grenada, while recent discoveries in Veragua, the adjoining province of Panama, have disclosed large deposites of excellent coal. These great resources in wood and coal will be found to be of incalculable advantage in the construction of the railroad, and supply of fuel to our locomotives and steamships. In short, this is the real El Dorado, which so many of our countrymen have undertaken a voyage of 17,000 miles to behold in California.

For the invaluable treaty with New Grenada, entered into

and confirmed during the administration of the late President Polk, the American people are chiefly indebted to our late lamented Charge des Affaires to that country, the Hon. Benjamin A. Bidlack, of Pennsylvania. Gifted with diplomatic talents the most eminent, he also combined a noble and generous disposition with a distinguished person and pleasing address, securing a paramount influence with the government to which he was accredited, and the highest popularity with the people among whom he resided. These qualifications, together with the well-known friendly and liberal sentiments of his government, enabled him to secure from the government of New Grenada that important and memorable treaty, and this, too, at a period when the ministers both of England and France were exerting their talents and influence to the utmost, to secure a similar treaty on behalf of their respective governments. The preceding narrative of facts, partially gleaned while in New Grenada, was extended and confirmed on our voyage home from Carthagena, by a highly-respectable American gentleman, who was very intimate with Mr. Bidlack, conversant with the whole history of the negotiation of the treaty, and placed in charge of the Legation immediately after his mournful decease. Thus, has our country acquired one of the most important treaties negotiated in the history of the world, while she has lost one of her most patriotic and eminent citizens. Peaceful be his repose and ever green his laurels.

As an evidence of the complete establishment of friendly relations with the people of New Grenada, we received, in common with most of our countrymen, the utmost attention and kindness from the natives and residents of the Isthmus, and especially of Panama, as well as from Señor Don Mariano Arossemena, the intendente of that department.

In character the educated classes are kind, generous, and

open-hearted, anxious to acquire our language, and to afford every facility and inducement for our residence among them. Their manners with less of the punctilio, and none of the hauteur of those of the Spaniards, partake of equal politeness, and greater sincerity. The character of the uneducated and laboring class of the natives is of course inferior in these qualities, but they are nevertheless a remarkably inoffensive and kind-hearted people. Notwithstanding the general inferiority of their mixed race, and the somewhat enervating effects of a tropical climate, they are able to undergo great bodily fatigue, and submit to arduous labor as canoemen, cargadores, muleteers, aguadores, &c. This disposition to labor is however not so freely manifested since the Americans have paid them so liberally, and it is unfortunately true, that they will on all occasions, exact twice and even three and four times the price or sum for articles, or labor, from strangers, that they will from each other. They are nevertheless devoid of legitimate enterprise and business capacity. Though horses and mules, such as they have, are numerous and cheap, yet they employ no wheeled vehicles in Panama nor in the adjacent level country. Every hour in the day the *aguadores* may be seen carrying four little jars or kegs of water fastened to a pack saddle on a mule; these are sold at one rial each, and thus the Panamanians receive their supplies of fresh water. When a decayed tree falls across the road they travel, there it remains from year to year, the natives clambering over it, or preferring to go up to their necks in mud or water around it, to clearing away the impediment. It is plain, therefore, that they cannot be employed to advantage on the railroad, but laborers must be had elsewhere. Though they drink *aguardiente* or Cogniac when to be obtained, yet intoxication is not common among them. They are gifted

with a full share of Spanish obstinacy, a very provoking instance of which we endured from an old fellow in Panama, who refused to sell a tin basin which we much needed, at any price, and only because it shone brightly, and he valued it as an incomparable ornament to his shop.

Having remained just a month among the New Grenadians, we now prepared for our departure, filled with many pleasant recollections.

CHAPTER XI.

Embarkation and Departure for San Francisco—Taboga—Scenes and Incidents—Gulf of Tehuantepec—Coast of Mexico—Burning Volcano—Arrival at San Blas—Cape Corientes—Gulf of California—Cape San Lucas—Natural Cavern on the Shore—Magdalena Island—Escape from Wreck—Southern Cross—Cerros Isles—Harbor of San Diego—Coast of California—Point St. Vincent—Midnight View of Monterey—Arrival at San Francisco.

The strong tide of the Pacific was surging and dashing against the dark mole of Panama, and the waves were rapidly covering the steps leading to the water, when with one foot in the sea and the other on the gunwale, we tumbled in among the stone ballast of a large bungo provided to convey us to the U. S. M. Steamer "Oregon," which lay at anchor some three miles out in the bay. After receiving our complement of fifteen or twenty passengers, with a corresponding supply of cigars and claret, which landed safely on our shins or "stove in the hold," we succeeded in prevailing upon our swarthy navigators to shove off. With "the blue above and the blue below," for cigars were all lighted, and the smoke was rolling from under the mess kettle of the crew; we bid adieu to our lingering friends, and took a final view of the ludicrous crowd of native *amigos*, as well as our watery eyes would permit.

Hoisting a bull's hide and leg of mutton sail on the rude bean poles used for masts, and tugging at the clumsy oars, *el*

patron soon passed the huge-pointed rock rising from the midst of the bay, and in due time laid us alongside ; preliminary to which he displayed his bungling seamanship by hauling down his bull hide too late, and treating us to a stern chase with oars only, against a strong tide, approved by the cachinatory applause of our friends on board.

Recovering from this, however, we reached the gangway, and amidst the howling, confusion, and fright of the crews of the various *canoas*, we clambered up the side and trod the deck, rejoiced once more at the prospect of proceeding to our destination. Finer specimens of naval architecture are not afloat than the steamships of this, the second line, established by American enterprise on the Pacific. The first line of British steamers on this ocean originated in the energy of William Wheelright, Esq., an American resident of Valparaiso.

But we found two hundred and eighty passengers, too many for comfort in a steamship of only one thousand tons. We all had cause for congratulation, however, in escaping a voyage of ten or twelve weeks by a sailing vessel ; and among our passengers some had paid for this object enormous prices, even to get berths in the steerage. These will not soon forget their first experience of "life in the steerage ;" and we opine, that not even *duff* would tempt them to a second lesson. Besides the agreeable society of two American ladies accompanying their husbands, several travelled officers of the army and navy assisted to enliven the tedium of the voyage.

Roused at daybreak by the sailors' song at the windlass, we gazed from our state-room window at the beauty of the dawn on the distant mountains, and with watch in hand, at 5 a. m., on the morning of the 13th of March, noted the first revolution of the wheels toward the El Dorado of our hopes.

Hastening on deck, we beheld the enchanting beauty of the Bay of Panama in all its extent. Its semicircular shores, skirted with green foliage, and enclosed with the high mountains of the Isthmus, hold within their embrace a miniature sea; while the bold islands of Flamingo, Perico, Tabogilla, Taboga, and others, rise some thousand feet or more above the surface, perfectly covered with verdure.

In a short time we came to anchor close to the shore, in a lovely little cove of Taboga. The whole island seems a paradise, and is filled with every variety of tropical vegetables and fruits. Among groves of the orange and mango reposes a picturesque native village, while, from a neighboring mountain dell, comes leaping forth a sparkling streamlet, forming, in a natural basin of rock, a crystal pool, where the natives, men, women, and children, resort in troops to bathe every morning and evening.

Vessels all obtain their supplies of water, fruits, &c., at this island, and the Pacific Mail Steam Ship Company have fixed their general depôt for coal, &c., on its shores.

The crowd of *canoas* had precipitately scattered from alongside, and the foam was rolling away from the first dash of the steamer's wheels, as the last of the fruit-seekers leaped to the platform of the gangway over the side. Turning quickly to secure the fruit obtained after a long ramble on shore, he beheld the *canoa* far astern, while the ludicrous gesticulation of the *patron*, and loud cries of "Stop her! stop her!" were equally unavailing. The luscious treasures were *sour grapes* —past all redemption.

We now commenced our voyage in earnest, and running ten knots an hour with calm weather and smooth sea, rounded Point Mala at sunset, and felt that we were once more "rocked in the cradle of the deep," having entered the Pacific

through the lubber's hole, as an old naval cruiser round the Horn expressed it.

We had now reached within seven degrees of the equator, and with a dead calm, and the heat of the furnaces, were sweltering at 95° to 100° Farenheit. Sleeping on deck became the order of the night, while buckets of old ocean, and the shady nooks under the bulwarks, were at a premium early in the morning and during the day. In a few days we were off the Gulf of Tehuantepec, and favored with the refreshing breeze and flashing white caps which usually prevail in that latitude. Besides the usual sights at sea, we were daily favored, as we approached northern latitudes, with a look at different species of whale, and the cry, "*there she blows*," often brought our spy-glasses in requisition. The *blow* of the whale is simply the vapor of its breath, and not sea-water, as many suppose.

North of Tehuantepec we made land again, which proved to be the bold mountain coast of Mexico, seen distinctly forty miles from the ship. Keeping within sight of these mountains, we saw, as night closed in, a red glare in the sky, which deepened as the darkness increased, until we were all convinced that it could be none other than a burning volcano. Referring to the chart, we found it to be the volcano of Colima, which is 12,000 feet high, and nearly 100 miles from the coast. Its appearance from the ocean was strange and mysterious, and our imaginations were well prepared when apprized of its true character, to conceive of the rocks of molten fire hissing above the clouds, the red lava pouring in crested fury from rock to ravine, from ravine to valley.

On the following day, we hove in sight of the Tres Marias —three pretty islands off the Mexican port of San Blas, where we soon after arrived, and remained two days, to obtain

supplies of coal, fresh fruits, and provisions. Off the mouth of the River Santiago or San Juan, (whereon the town lies,) an immense white rock rises isolated from the sea, bearing a singular resemblance to a light-house, and always steered for by ships heading for the port. Near to this is also a singular group of white rocks, looking, from a distance, exactly like a flock of sheep. The description of the town, and our visit to it, we leave for a future chapter. Being half way or more on our voyage, we welcomed our arrival there; and among the several small vessels in port, one recently arrived from El Dorado furnished us with most exciting intelligence.

Rowing from shore to ship the night before sailing, we were favored with a magnificent display of the phosphorescent light of the sea. The night was calm and still, broken only by the music of the surf or stroke of the oars, their flashing blades sparkling with gems of sapphire and pearl, while the turquoise and diamond fell in resplendent showers from our foaming prow.

Having despatched letters for our friends by the Mexican courier to Vera Cruz, we took our departure from San Blas early on Sunday morning, 25th of March. Listening to the tramp and song of the sailors at the capstan and windlass, we caught the words—

"The Oregons are a jolly crew,
O, yes, O!
A bully mate and captain, too,
A hundred years ago."

The second and last lines formed the chorus, and they roared it out right heartily, bringing many from below in time to behold the sun rise above the mountains of Mexico in great glory and magnificence, requiring but a small stretch of the

imagination, as its full orb was displayed above the highest peak, to picture old Atlas standing beneath, upholding the world upon his palm.

In the afternoon we made Cape Corientes in sight on our starboard bow, and early on the following morning were off the entrance to the great gulf, or more properly sea of California. At the season when southeasters prevail, this gulf is stormy and the navigation very dangerous. The port of Guaymas on the Mexican main, some 500 miles from its mouth, has a considerable commerce in the imports and exports of Sonora and the adjoining states; but vessels do not often venture in the gulf during the prevalence of the southeast gales, for although nearly 200 miles wide at the entrance it soon narrows to only about forty.

At sunrise of the next morning we hove in sight of Cape San Lucas, the southernmost land of the peninsula of Lower California. Here then was California, and though not *the* El Dorado, yet the high lands we beheld, were a continuation of the famous *coast range*. With intense interest we accordingly gazed upon the mountains and shores of the cape (or rather promontory, fifty miles wide), presenting the forms of vast naked pyramids and conical peaks, towering one above another, with dark chasms and ravines yawning between. We sailed within a half mile of the land, and saw a beautiful little cove where there is good anchorage, just inside the southwestern extremity of the cape. Here there is a sandy beach, but the shores are mostly of volcanic rock, as indeed the whole country appears to be, affording here no vegetation, except scraggy moss or a few prickly pears. On the eastern side of the peninsula just above the entrance of the gulf, we could discern by the aid of telescopes the small town of San José, where ships go for water and supplies, and to trade with

the natives for the gold dust and silver ore, which they obtain from the mountains of the interior, in sufficient quantities for their livelihood.

The spectacle, however, which most interested us as we approached close to the shores of this bold mountain promontory, was a wonderful and most beautiful natural cavern, opening its yawning abyss into an immense rock towering on the verge of the ocean, while two others, of a pyramidal form, stood sentinels to guard the entrance, with the wild surf roaring between.

The largest opening in front was as perfect as if regularly arched, while at the side appeared a similar but smaller arch resting upon a pillar descending into the waves. Looking into the cave by the principal entrance, and out through the side arch, the waters of the pretty little bay beyond were dancing like fairies in the bright sunlight, while the giant breakers within thundered defiance from their gloomy haunt.

To the northward of Cape San Lucas, we met a rapid change in the weather: with a strong head wind came the fogs, and wet, driving mists peculiar to the coast, and woollen clothing became necessary. Sailing almost continually in sight of the shores of this peninsula, we had an excellent opportunity to observe their formation. This appeared to consist entirely of volcanic mountains, looking like chalk and blue clay, or bare sand hills, bleak and desolate along their whole course. Much valuable mineral wealth is believed to be stored in this uninviting region. Magdalena Bay may yet be as famous as that of San Francisco.

Approaching the large island of that name which with the main land forms the bay, we had all turned in our births one night, when the sudden stopping of the wheels, and frequent signals of the engineer's bell, awoke us from slumber. Going

on deck, we found the ship close on the land, here some three or four thousand feet above the sea, while we were heading by the stars, south by east, instead of northwest, which was our proper course. Thus she had run far up between the island and the main, and before putting about, the land seemed right under our bows. The shores are bold, with plenty of water close in, and no reefs; and there may also be a safe but narrow passage, but the charts of the whole northwest coast are very incomplete and imperfect. Our skipper was therefore a little alarmed, particularly at what appeared to be breakers close aboard, but which we discovered to be an immense school of *bonitas* or skip-jacks, which we several times met with on this ocean in such extraordinary numbers, that their incessant leaping from the waves covered the sea with foam, presenting a most animated and beautiful sight.

We had a fine opportunity this night, of observing the remarkable constellation of the Southern Cross. Composed of five stars, three of which are of the second magnitude, it was at that hour full upon the meridian, and displayed the perfect form of the cross.

At sunset of the following day, we were off Cerros Isles, their towering mountain ridges, bathed in the glories of the retiring orb, presented the appearance of rivers of burning lava, flowing in irregular and winding streams to the ocean, between which were the deep and dark ravines. One little isle nearer the main, looked like a pyramid of flaming fire, while over all floated the purple clouds in crowning beauty to the scene.

The change in the atmosphere now became very great, the thermometer having rapidly fallen to 55°; we began to enter the *intemperate* zone, and to manifest symptoms of *tremens*. Approaching the termination of the coast of Lower Califor-

nia, we passed between the mainland and several beautiful islands, rising abruptly from the sea, and of the most fantastical forms. One in particular bears the form of regular architecture, resembling in shape the great reservoir of the Croton Aqueduct in New York.

At daylight of the 30th of March, we came in sight of the Coroñados, two high, round-topped rocks off the port of San Diego, and soon entering its beautiful little semi-circular harbor, we hailed with joy our own soil and the first American port on the Pacific. Protected on the north and east by high bluffs, the face of which, seaward, has been cut down perpendicularly, and a breakwater formed at its base by the old Spaniards, this is a fine and safe harbor, having everywhere four and a half to eleven fathoms water. It is also susceptible of complete defence, by a fortification on the bluff and a water battery on the low island at the entrance of the southern channel, both of which might be easily constructed; and all these advantages combined, would make San Diego the best naval depôt on the coast. We found here only a few hide houses, the town being a mile or two inland, and only seven of the male population remaining, all the rest having gone up to the mines.

Delaying only to land the mails, we proceeded on our voyage, passing just without the harbor an immense field of seaweed, the leaves very beautiful in formation, and provided with a large ball to enable them to float on the surface. We saw also many small whale, called the California gray, which are not molested by whalers, as they furnish but little oil.

We were now off the coast of Upper or Alta California, towards which all the maratime nations of the earth were carrying their flag and their emigration. With the highest interest, therefore, we gazed upon all the changing views

before us. One extraordinary bluff especially attracted our attention. It presented a face of black and white rocks, having every angle and battlement of an immense natural fortification, while rising immediately above it is the coast range of mountains, and beyond this, in the background, are the towering peaks of the Sierra Nevada, covered with snow to their summits, mingling the deep green, purple, silver and pearl, lost amid the clouds; while spread over all was the mantle of the changing sunlight.

The same day we were off Point St. Vincent, a high promontory, covered at this season with the most verdant carpet of grass, and with fields of wild rape or mustard, a golden yellow flower; while from the summit descends a regular succession of natural terraces, covered with the same beautiful drapery to the very edge of the water. Herds of wild horses were seen apparently gazing in wonder at the moving monster of the sea, or rushing affrighted to the hill top. The scene was quite enchanting after our long voyaging from home, and delightfully contrasted with the iron-bound shores and volcanic desolation of Lower California. The succeeding night we entered the bay, or rather bight of Monterey, and aided only by the light of the stars, enjoyed a midnight view of the town, with the amphitheatre of high-wooded hills in the background. Aroused by the reverberations along the shores of our signal gun, the inhabitants showed here and there a light; but we were not enabled to form any definite idea of the town. Only one small vessel was in port, and our mail boat brought back intelligence of the desertion of nearly all the mail inhabitants for the mines.

Just before resuming our voyage, the ship's carpenter, a very active and intelligent man, dropped over the side, a mile from the shore. With a life preserver around him, he was

on his way to the gold region, having landed his traps along with a steerage passenger, put ashore in the mail boat. As the strong tide was setting in shore, he probably landed in safety, unless he became food for sharks, of which there was some risk. Thus were we reminded that we were near the termination of two voyages, and within reach of the famous *gold region* of California.

Having sailed 3,500 miles on the Pacific, our anticipations of the character of that ocean had been verified. A well-manned whale-boat could have followed the whole distance in our wake with entire safety, and, indeed, two of these arrived about that time in the Bay of San Francisco from the Sandwich Islands, with adventurers.

Making our voyage in a steamship, we enjoyed continual views of the shores of the Pacific. There is no *beach*, but the *coast range* of Alta-California descends into the sea, as if to set perpetual bounds to the vastness of this great ocean. These are not mountains, properly so called, but a series of round, irregular hills, very rarely displaying any signs of vegetation, except the sparse grass and wild flowers, with here and there patches of a kind of mint, and other weeds.

At 10 a. m. of Sunday, April 1st, 1849, we hove in sight of the Farallones, two large detached rocks in the sea at the southern side of the magnificent gateway or straits, opening through the coast range into the Bay of San Francisco.

The morning was clear and beautiful, the deep blue sky, covered here and there with a fleecy cloud, while the fine nor-west breeze, fresh from the ocean, chased the gambolling waves clear into the open portals of the hills. The tide was setting in at the rate of five miles an hour, and our gallant steamer ploughed her way through the sea with yards ataunto, and streamers flying; her decks, shrouds, and wheel-houses

covered with an excited multitude, eager for the promised haven. As we entered the mouth of the Narrows, here some two or three miles wide, our eyes rested on a high, rounded bluff on the south side, backed by a few rods of yellow sand beach, and on the north a range of bolder hills, some 200 to 500 feet high, maintaining their forms unbroken to the ocean, where they seem to have been cut off by some huge spade or cleaver, presenting perpendicular cliffs of rock and bluish clay to the roaring surf. Covered with green grass and low shrubs, but no trees, these hills present a picturesque, yet barren appearance, affording, nevertheless, a beautiful contrast with the flat, sandy coast of the Atlantic. The innumerable ravines were clothed with patches of wild flowers, and the ridges covered with herds of wild cattle and horses, grazing in every direction.

Sailing, as it were, into the midst of the hills for about three or four miles, the great Bay of San Francisco gradually opened to our view, a miniature ocean. Right ahead appeared Bird Island, with the white surf foaming at its base, and thousands of wild-fowl filling the air above it; yet farther on our starboard bow, Wood Island lay in front of the cove of San Francisco, while on our larboard uprose the dark heights of Angel Island, the largest of the three, with the beautiful little Bay of Saucelito under its lee on the main. Here we came to anchor alongside the "Ohio," seventy-four, delivering our despatches and mail for the squadron.

CHAPTER XII.

Saucelito—Mutiny and Desertion—San Francisco—Climate of the Coast—Description of the Town—State of Affairs—Chunks of Gold—Scenes and Incidents—Hotels—French Cafe—Gambling Tables—A Walk among the Tents—View of Ocean and Bay—Presidio—Mission of San Francisco Dolores—Reason of the Long Concealment of Gold Discoveries by the Padres—A Night at "Merrill's," and Preparation for Departure.

SAUCELITO BAY, where we were now anchored, is a beautiful little cove on the northerly side, and just at the inner termination of the Narrows. Enclosed on three sides by high and almost perpendicular hills, it is entirely protected from the strong norwest gales of the ocean, while towards the Bay of San Francisco, it is shielded by Angel Island. Having a great depth of water and good holding ground, vessels of the largest class anchor close to the shore; and our squadron of seven ships, including the "Ohio," lay there at the time of our arrival.

Good water is obtained from a little rivulet among the hills; and here we were informed was the new city of Saucelito. This, after a close examination, we discovered to consist of one board shed and one tent, holding on to the hill-side like a woodpecker against a tree; nevertheless, the wide and elegant streets were much frequented by dirty fingers on the map, and lots were frequently changing hands at advancing prices.

No sooner was our anchor down opposite *the city*, than mutiny and disaffection appeared among the crew. The gold region was too near, temptation too powerful; and they refused duty, were handcuffed and sent aboard the "Ohio," where they cheerfully shared Uncle Sam's grog, awaiting a chance to run. The same night the third officer, with part of the crew kept on board the steamer, took their leave *a la Française*, with boats alongside, which were recovered, being only used by them to effect a landing.

The efforts of the captain thus to retain his crew, being found worse than useless, we got up steam on the following day, and leaving Racoon Straits and Angel Island on our larboard hand, passed Bird Island, and coming up with Wood Island, cast anchor in the cove of San Francisco between that and the main, a distance of eight or nine miles from Saucelito. This cove lies on the westerly shore of the bay, and is concealed from view as you enter the Narrows by the high hills on their southern shore. Emerging from these, the town and anchorage suddenly present themselves to the excited stranger, and what a sight is here—what a contrast to the *latitude* and longitude of Richmond—what a damper to the *climate* of Italy! Shade of Pocahontas, restless for the honor of the Old Dominion, retire once more to your repose! Spirit of Tasso, linger yet amid the floral bowers of your loved Italia! Ghost of St. Francis, welcome us to your chosen shores, where a forbidding climate and desolate scene confirmed the austerity of your ancient followers!

Rising abruptly from the water, an amphitheatre of three or four ugly round-topped, barren hills, with their intervening holes, form the site of the notorious town of San Francisco. These hills and ravines answer a two-fold purpose. The miserable sandy clay soil produces a weed which a starv-

ing jackass will scorn, and a fine dust for the visual organs, which the most impenetrable eyelids are not proof against, while the deep ravines and opposing ridges afford full sweep to the perpetual gales from ocean and bay in the summer, with a "smart chance" for rivulets and ponds in the winter.

As it is an "ill wind," however, "that blows nobody any good," so these summer gales are approved of by the laundresses of the town; and though the rigging is sometimes parted, and clothes carried away, yet *they* are at the risk of the owner. The *rainy season* of winter may also enable the inhabitants to obtain some fresh water altogether superior to the brackish element of their wells; this advantage, however, must not be too loudly boasted of, inasmuch as we are informed that the rainy season sometimes omits its visitation for two years in succession. The *dry season proper* is from the 1st of March to 1st of November. The mornings are then generally clear, with a hot sun until the middle of the day, when the sky becomes overcast and gloomy—a strong northwest gale sets in from the ocean, often accompanied at nightfall by a thick, driving fog, and the thermometer rapidly falls some forty degrees or more, making the nights most dreary and uncomfortable; constituting a climate in the highest degree repulsive and disagreeable. This we found to be the climate of the coast in the month of April; and all who resided there agreed that it is worse as the summer advances. It is, nevertheless, perfectly healthy, the bracing air from the sea inducing a vigorous appetite; and as patients of the hydropathic system are said to become fond of the treatment in time, we can only account in a similar way for the admiration evinced by some for this climate of sudden transitions and never-ending fogs. We noticed that catarrhs

or common colds always settled upon the lungs with a violent cough, especially after the free use of wines.

Threading our way in a small boat among some fifty sail of vessels lying at anchor in the cove, and mostly deserted by officers and crews, we landed among the slippery rocks underneath a high bank, up which we scrambled some fifty feet perpendicular. Here was a strange scene. Vessels from nearly every quarter of the globe had brought the denizens of every clime; and verily, to coin a suitable word, we were in the Cosmopolis of the world.

Discharged convicts, from New South Wales, Mexicans, Kanakas, Peruvians, Chilians, representatives of all the European nations, with here and there the dangling cue of the Chinaman, were intermixed, like stray cattle in a pound. Amidst confusion the most comical, and despair the most piteous, these poor wretches were tumbled into a heap of pots, pans, kettles, bales, and boxes, or were wandering hither and thither, seeking a place of shelter.

Disengaging ourselves from the throng as speedily as practicable, we wended our way along the hard-beaten hill-side, ascending and descending for one or two hundred yards, till we came to the town which is situated at the farther bend of the cove. There we paused to observe the scenes in progress at the other landing, where, upon a flat beach of deep black sand were piled trunks of every description, some with young gentlemen sitting upon them and looking very forlorn, others poised upon shoulders used only to broadcloth or epaulette, while here and there slender arms unused to toil were pushing a well-laden wheelbarrow through the deep sand and up the gentle declivities. Mingled with these were negroes or sailors, Jack being generally "half-seas over," at ten dollars a day.

Many queer scenes were thus hourly witnessed, and we were forcibly reminded of the old nursery rhyme, of Jack and Jill.

Proceeding in our survey, we found the streets, or properly the roads, laid out quite regularly, those parallel with the water being a succession of terraces, and those ascending the hills or along their sides being in some instances cut down ten or twelve feet below the surface. Except a portion of the street fronting upon the cove they are all of hard-beaten, sandy clay and as solid as if Macadamized. About three hundred houses, stores, shanties and sheds, with a great many tents, composed the town at that period. The houses were mostly built of rough boards and unpainted; brown cottons or calico nailed against beams and joists answered for wall and ceiling of the better class of tenements. With the exception of the brick warehouse of Howard & Mellus, the establishments of the commercial houses of which we had heard so much, were inferior to the outhouses of the country seats on the Hudson; and yet it would puzzle the New York Exchange to produce merchant princes of equal importance.

Although the reader is doubtless well apprized of the extraordinary state of things prevailing there in regard to commercial, social, and domestic affairs, as a result of the *gold fever* raging in all parts of the world; yet we here place some of these facts on record for future reference; trusting that if the perusal of them is tiresome, it will be omitted and something of interest found in succeeding pages.

Everywhere we beheld the most astonishing evidences of the abundance of the gold brought from the mines. Quarts of the dust or scale gold were to be seen on the tables and counters, or in the safes of all classes of men and although the form of small scales was most common, yet pieces or lumps of a quarter to three ounces were to be seen everywhere, and

among several *chunks*, one was shown us, by C. L. Ross, Esq., weighing *eighty-one ounces*, or six pounds and three quarters. This was solid, pure gold, with only the appearance of a little quartz in it. The aggregate of gold in different forms seen by us in one day amounted to bushels, and this, except some of the largest lumps, was too pure for jewelry or coin, without alloy. As a consequence of this abundance of the precious metal, though the price per ounce was maintained at sixteen dollars, yet the actual depreciation in comparison with property and merchandise was very great. Common laborers could only be obtained at ten dollars per day, and but for a few days retained.

Carpenters and blacksmiths, the only mechanics employed, received one ounce per day. Lumber sold as high as $600 per thousand feet. The merest necessaries of life commanded the most extravagant prices. Laundresses received $8 per dozen, and cooks $150 per month ; and it was nearly impossible to obtain either. The prices of houses and lots were from $10,000, to $75,000, each. A lot purchased two years ago for a barrel of *aguardiente* was sold recently for $18,000. One new three story frame hotel, about forty by sixty feet, cost $180,000, and rented for an interest of more than twenty per cent. per annum ; small rooms for gambling purposes renting for $400 per month. Yet, nothwithstanding these enormous incomes, speculation so raged that as high as twenty-five per cent. was actually paid for the use of money for *one week*. Vast quantities of merchandise, unsuitable, useless, and worse than valueless, had been landed on these shores from all the ports of the Pacific, from the Sandwich Islands, and the East Indies. Think of whole cargoes of calicoes and silks, for a country with comparatively no female population ; of rich and costly furniture, to embellish, generally, stables con-

verted into shantees, or to lie in heaps upon the sand; of houses ready constructed, to be erected upon town lots, which none but a Wall street or London banker could purchase; of tobacco enough to supply the whole present and prospective population for two or three years; and of paper, which the stupendous wastefulness and extravagance of all the congresses and legislatures of the Union, could not have consumed since the Declaration.

Our high fever of excitement, amidst such a state of affairs, would be difficult to define. Wandering everywhere, eyes and ears were constantly employed. The bar-rooms and hotels were crowded with revellers—money, wines, and liquor flowed like water. Gold dust, doubloons, and dollars were the only currency men would look at, old miners often scattering smaller coins in the streets by handsful, rather than count or carry them. A French *café* was thronged with hungry customers, at three dollars for a cup of coffee, bit of ham, and two eggs. Gambling prevailed to an extent heretofore unheard of and unknown. The *monté* and *roulette* tables, encircled continually day and night by a dense mass, were covered with bags of gold dust and heaps of doubloons and Mexican dollars, which were incessantly changing hands in enormous amounts. Pistols and revolvers, fired in recklessness or fun sometimes, made the air musical with loud reports or whistling messengers, while, at other hours, intoxicated men, mounted on fleet horses, were rushing to and fro through the streets, or tramping over the portico of the City Hotel.

Leaving these wild scenes, we strolled among the tents in the outskirts of the town. Here was "confusion worse confounded" chiefly among Mexicans, Peruvians and Chilians. Every kind, size, color and shape of tent, pitched helter skelter and in the most awkward manner, were stowed full of every-

thing under the sun. Outside, innumerable articles were exposed for sale or stored in the open air, while the smoke of the cook's fire and greasy pork, overpowered both olfactory and visual organs. This duty and similar ones were performed by men, who, without the aid of female *helpmeets*, seemed about as helpless, and looked as black as Cain driven into the wilderness.

Ascending to the top of one of the hills above the town, we enjoyed a prospect of the kind unequalled in the world. Attracted by the thunder of the surf we looked upon the great Pacific, dashing perpetually at the base of the coast range, or rolling with rapid current through the Narrows,* while stretching away to the north and south a distance of seventy miles, the waters of the Bay of San Francisco surrounded by irregular green hills, appeared like a great inland sea, receiving the floods of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers for distribution to the ocean. At our feet lay the town of San Francisco, apparently built in a night, containing two years ago but a dozen houses, known as Yerba Buena (good herb) by the Californians, from the wild mint growing on the hills; but now denominated by general consent Yerba Mala, or bad herb. Beyond this was the anchorage, already crowded with vessels of every kind, their boats rowing to and fro, while large ships were beating through the narrows or rapidly coming in with all sails set, affording a grand contrast to the white wings of the small craft dotting the wide surface of the bay, or threading their way among the distant islands.

Over these hills, and near the entrance of the Narrows, is the old *presidio* or fort; and about three miles from the town, towards the bay, lies the old Mission of San Francisco Dolores. The buildings are said to be much dilapidated, and

* Since appropriately named the Golden Gate.

the good *padres* are making an effort to repair the church; but the day both of their supremacy and influence in California has gone by, never to return.

This they had the sagacity long ago to foresee; and thus only can we account for the rigid silence as to the existence of gold in the country, maintained for more than a century.

That these priests were cognizant of the abundance of the precious metal at that period, is now well known; but they were members of the extraordinary society of the Jesuits, which, jealous of its all-pervading influence, and dreading the effect of a large Protestant emigration to the western, as well as to the eastern shores of America, applied its powerful injunctions of secrecy to the members of the Order; and their faithful obedience during so long period, is another proof both of the strength and the danger of their organization.

Returning from our rambles, we took up our quarters for the night at "Merrill's on the hill," or as we afterwards christened it, by general consent, the Irving House. The proprietor, a carpenter by trade, with his wife, (a pleasant and industrious New-England dame,) enlisted in Stevenson's regiment, and thus found themselves in El Dorado in the niche of time. Building himself a good house, they have since received and entertained crowds of their countrymen, with comparative comfort to the latter and profit to themselves. Here we obtained a snug bed on a floor in the corner, and under heaps of clothing shivered till morning, entertained all night by the howling nor'wester of this delicious climate

We, therefore, concluded we had enough of it, and determined to be off to the *diggins* next day.

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure for Sutter's Fort—Schooner Rainbow—Gold Rock, or Red Island—Two Brothers and Two Sisters—Wild-Fowl—Guano—Seal—Sonoma Bay, or Bay of San Pablo—Beautiful Little Vale—Straits of Karquinez—Benecia City—Suisun Bay—Monte Diablo—Suisun City—Mouths of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers—New York of the Pacific—Volcanic Formation of the Californias—A Night on Board and Breakfast on Shore—Tulare Marshes—Pillar of Fire—Sacramento River—Scenery—Navigation—Game—Ducks and Wild Geese—Elk—Wild Horses—Bald Eagles.

On the afternoon of the 3d of April, having trans-shipped our freight and baggage from the steamer, and completed the purchase of necessary supplies, we wended our way once more to the landing, each man with a bag, box, or bundle on his shoulder, and obtaining a small boat, were soon on board the schooner "Rainbow," of fourteen tons, Capt. William Smith, late farmer in Oregon. This famous little craft was formerly a pleasure steamboat, presented to Mr. Leidesdorff, of San Francisco, by the Russian Fur Company, and purchased by Capt. Smith for the enormous sum of $5,000; but before we left the country he had sold her for $5,500. Besides eight tons of freight and baggage, we had on board fourteen passengers, and four sailors from the Sandwich Islands, working their passage to the gold region, making, with the captain, nineteen in all. For this trip, as far as the Embarcadero on the Sacramento, 125 miles, we paid $25 each, and $5 per 100 lbs., for baggage.

Getting under sail with a stiff westerly wind, we passed rapidly up the bay, admiring its beautiful bold shores, carpeted with green, or studded here and there with a species of dark scrub oak. We soon made the little island called, indiscriminately, Gold Rock, and Red or Treasure Island, while directly ahead in the straits of San Pablo, and at each entrance, lay the four large rocks called the "Two Brothers" and "Two Sisters." These were covered with a white coat of *guano*, with thousands of wild-fowl screaming around them, consisting of a species of duck, with long neck and bill, called schaggs, and a bird of the goose kind, called brant.

Surrounding these rocks, and in the rapid current of the straits, the black fur seal were floating and sticking their nose out of water in every direction, their heads precisely resembling the head of a large pointer dog, and of a dun color.

Passing through these straits we entered the beautiful little bay of the same name, or as sometimes called Sonoma Bay. The sun was now declining, and gazing on the northern shore, we saw illumined by its bright rays, a lovely little vale, protected by gentle wooded declivities from the chill nor'westers, while the sparkling rivulet gushed from its secluded dells, mingling its murmuring stream with the noisy waters of the bay.

We now entered the Straits of Karquinez, where the shores on either side became bolder, and being clothed to their summits with a carpet of grass, were at this season of the year very beautiful. On the northern shore, near the eastern terminus of these straits, and where the ground below the hills for a few hundred yards is less precipitous, lies

Benecia* City, forty-five miles from San Fancisco. The house of Mr. Cooper, with one or two other houses, and ten or eleven shantees, comprised the then population of the city. As its apparently bleak and sterile back country appears incapable of producing supplies, it is inconceivable how a town of any size should ever spring up here, except by the united efforts of a great many speculators. Lots were in the first instance given away, on condition that the recipients should build on them. After this, $20 to $40 were obtained for a few lots, an elegant map was furnished, with numerous streets and public squares, with high-sounding names, a scow ferry-boat was established and called the Benecia City Ferry, and an announcement made through the Alta-Californian newspaper, that certain *public-spirited* gentlemen had gratuitously set apart several lots in the new city for a *University*. Gazing eagerly at this classic ground, our thoughts wandered into dim (*very dim*) futurity, when descendants of the merchant princes and digger lords of California would here drink of the Piræan Spring, hailing with proud veneration the Alma Mater of their Pilgrim Fathers. In addition to this enterprise, two old store ships were brought up from San Francisco, and safely moored along the bank, furnishing a forest of masts, fully proportioned to this great commercial port—the result of all which was, *that city lots* were selling in April last as high as $1000.

Resisting the temptation to tarry awhile amidst the thronged streets and public edifices of this great city, we were wafted by a steady breeze past all danger from the rapid ferry-boats into the shallow but extensive waters of Suisun Bay. Steering through the North Channel, we found no less depth than four fathoms water, and recent surveys have confirmed our

* Pronounced Venecia.

observations. This, however, was during the annual river flood. The shores of this bay are lower and more diversified, the green volcanic hills on the south side resembling the waves of the ocean; while beyond these, the dark, bold form of Monte Diablo rears its towering height, conspicuous from a great distance, as lord of the *coast range*. Just at the entrance of the bay, on the northeast, is the site of the city of Suisun, where one tent, it was confidently believed, would soon be erected. The location is level and quite pretty. Into this bay debouche the Sacramento and San Joachin* rivers, discharging a large body of water, not only through their proper mouths, but a great number of *sloughs*.†

Sweeping down with a broad and rapid current, these two rivers, of which the Sacramento is much the larger, form at their juncture the commencement of the series of great bays, which, at some very remote period, burst their way through the *coast range* to the ocean, forming the entrance to the bay of San Francisco. This event was, doubtless, coeval with the great volcanic convulsions which forever fixed the external natural formation of the whole of the Californias, both Upper and Lower. While in Alta-California, a beautiful valley, watered by broad rivers, was then formed, or allowed to remain west of the Sierra Nevada range of mountains; so, in continuance of this valley, and westward of the *same range*, on the coast of Mexico, the great Gulf of California was created in-land, or cut off from the ocean by this mysterious and terrific agency. As a further proof of this theory—for after all we can only theorize—the peninsula and *coast range* of Lower California are in proportionate elevation to the coast range of Alta-California, as the depression of the *basin* of the gulf is to that of the valleys of the Sa-

* Pronounced, San Waw-keen. † Pronounced, slues.

cramento and San Joaquin. The depression necessary to form the basin of the gulf being greater than that of the valleys, so is the elevation of the mountains of the peninsula *greater* than the coast range of Upper California. The width of the gulf also corresponds nearly with that of the valleys, being an average of forty to fifty miles.

Continuing to be favored with a fair wind we passed the mouth of the San Joachin and sailed up the Sacramento, having on our starboard hand the beautiful and level peninsula formed by the juncture of the two rivers, recently purchased by George McDougall, Esq. and others, for a town site, and from the similarity of its position called "New York of the Pacific." At the head of ship navigation, and contiguous to the trading posts and the mines, there is reason to believe that it will eventually become one of the large towns in Alta-California. The proprietors propose to bestow upon it the Indian name of the Sacramento, with which we are unacquainted.

Night now closed around us, and we prepared to pass it on board our little launch as comfortably as circumstances would permit. Dividing our number into two watches, we laid boards across from the seat on the side of the *after saloon*, which said boards constituted our mattrass. This would contain seven persons with *close stowage*, and the hours fixed for each watch were from eight to one, and one to six o'clock. Falling into the second watch below, we enjoyed ourselves in the observation of the pains and perils of the first "in for a snooze." Though accustomed to their native element of Nantucket oil, and pretty *slick* Yankees themselves; yet lamper eels in a mill dam never had a tighter squeeze. In the forward hold, and separated only by a bulkhead, was a quantity of fragrant bacon; closely attached to

this, reclined the most sleepy specimen of the party, while tightly wedged in next to him were six fellow sufferers, with carpet-bags, valises and writing desks for pillows, and sundry cigar boxes, guns, pistols and rifles, to fill the remaining space. The watch on deck, in the meantime, amused themselves by singing to keep their feet warm, in which they were joined by a large Newfoundland dog, baying the moon as lullaby to the sleepers. Thus passed the long and chilly night, broken only by the unwelcome cry of *tumble up*, *tumble up*, to the watch below. When it came our turn to wedge in, we soon forgot our real woes of pressure, noise and cold, in dreams of "joys that we've tasted." Aroused at daybreak by a shout of *turn out*, we, by dint of many hard thumps, induced the *outsider* to commence that operation, and thus enable us to accomplish it also.

Going on deck, we found the "Rainbow" laid up to the shore, skirted by charred and tangled underwood, and our fellow passengers busily engaged in preparing breakfast. The smoke was curling in thick clouds from the fire on the wet *tule*, and amid much tribulation and suffocation the process of cooking was in slow progress. Bolting down our first meal in the wilderness with such appetite as the keen air supplied, we speedily resumed our journey.

Leaving the shore, and gaining once more the middle of the stream, we saw on either hand immense *tulare* marshes stretching as far as the eye could see. These marshes abound in the valley of the Sacramento, often covering fifty miles in circumference. The *tule* is a kind of *rush*, but grows higher and thicker than our common rush, and at this season of the year, "green grow the rashes O," throughout the whole of the extensive plains bordering on these rivers. In the Autumn before the rains, or in Spring before growing up again, they

are frequently set in a blaze from the camp fires of the Indians or others, causing most extensive and long-continued conflagrations. The flames from one of these illumined the sky all the previous night, forming an immense volume of fire by night, and of smoke by day.

The Sacramento River is quite wide near its mouth, and gradually lessons to an average width of about half a mile in the main river, forming a fine, broad and placid stream, with graceful curves at long distances. At first, its margin is hedged only by thick underwood, or *tule*, but higher up both shores are skirted with large trees, chiefly a species of scraggy white oak and sycamore. These are covered with the miseltoe bough and a species of long dry moss, flowing from the branches, with leaves of fairy net work, its light shade of green contrasting beautifully with the dark foliage of the miseltoe and oak. The river was now much swollen from the melting ice and snow of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and as the tide only rises from two to three feet, the current is very strong in mid channel, making the trip a tedious one for sailing vessels at most seasons of the year. Sunken, or partly floating snags abound *near the shores*, and vessels unable to stem the current often get foul of them, or aground on the mud and sand shoals, but generally without injury. For steam navigation, however, the Sacramento cannot be excelled, and its winding and varied shores, while delighting the traveller with their charming scenery, furnish abundance of fuel to aid in propelling him on his course.

Gazing towards the *coast range* on the west, we beheld the beautiful table-land at its base covered with luxuriant grass and flowers, and skirted towards the river with a green, waving border of new-grown *tule*. In the far distance we could distinctly see herds of wild horses and droves of elk quietly

feeding, or with flowing mane and uplifted antlers bounding over the ridges, or snuffing the air, and gazing affrighted towards the white wings of our gliding craft.

In the early morning the air was filled with noisy flocks of ducks or wild geese, in numbers most extraordinary and inconceivable: the latter, especially, extending in single and double files, two and three miles in length. During the day we saw many large bald eagles soaring at an immense height, while in mid air the large gray hawks were ever hovering over and watching for their prey, the latter pouncing, in one instance, upon a poor snake, and bearing him, in squirming helplessness, to the family larder in some old oak. The large nests of the eagles, made of coarse sticks and leaves, perched on the tops of the towering and decaying sycamores, seemed like gray wigs crowning the ancient patriarchs of the forest, and tempting us often to a good shot at noble game. Nightfall found us at the entrance of Merritt's Slough, where we prepared to encamp.

CHAPTER XIV.

Merritt's Slough—Camp on Shore—Camp Fire, and Surrounding Scenes—Convicts from New South Wales—Party from the Mines—Digging on the Yuba—Gold Discoveries—Breaking up Camp—Warping through the Slough—A Tramp for Game—Barber's Ranche—Their Experience at the Mines—Soil and Climate of the Sacramento Valley.

At the close of the second day after our departure from San Francisco, we left the main channel of the Sacramento, and entered one of its numerous *bayous*, called Merritt's Slough. This is usually followed in preference to the main river, because the windings of the latter increase the distance some twenty miles; but as the current of the *slough* is very strong, it is often avoided by the larger vessels.

Watching for a favorable spot, our farmer boy *skipper* put in for a landing; and shoving the nose of our brave little schooner gently among the "tangled wild wood," we scrambled through the thicket of willow and primrose, reaching the open belt of timber extending from the *slough* to the river.

Having subsisted all day on ship biscuit, and water sweetened with the black but saccharine sugar of the Sandwich Islands, we were as hungry as grizzly bears. Though we had abundance of barrelled provisions laid in for the mines; yet, in the haste of our departure, and the *peculiar* shewdness or culpable neglect of one member of our committee on supplies

for the journey, our comfort was sacrificed and our choice private stores consumed, before we arrived at Sutter's Fort.

Selecting a dry and level spot under the trees, all hands were speedily engaged in camp duties. Carrying ashore our tent, blankets, hammocks, camp hamper, &c., we wore an Indian path in the woods, while some carried water from the Sacramento, or fell to, with axe in hand, to make tent poles and pins; others kindled by the side of an old log the *kitchen fire*, running "hither, thither, and yon," for dried wood, or with bowie-knife and spoon cut the pork and mixed the coffee.

Pitching tent to most of us was a new employment; but we managed to arrange it quite commodiously on a part of Nature's carpet, where there were neither stones, stumps, nor jagged rocks; taking care, also, to fix it well to windward of our fire, to avoid the *fix* of a conflagration.

The two cooks for the night now commenced operations. With coats off and sleeves rolled up, one busily attended a large iron pan, in which the process of par-boiling and frying pork was conducted, followed by a grand fry in the fat thereof of soaked pilot bread; while the assistant cook, diving into smoke and flame, with a crooked stick, hauled forth a bed of live coals, on which he carefully deposited a large tin pail filled with the pure water of the Sacramento, to be converted in due time into the most approved coffee. Tin cups, plates, spoons, and bowie-knives, were now rapidly brought into requisition; and nineteen hungry wolves, scouring the snow-clad plains of Siberia, and gathered in magic circle around their prey, could not have *varnished* the bones with equal celerity. While thus, with quiet animation, pleasingly employed, shouts from the river side, and taper masts peering among the trees,

announced new comers; and soon the resounding axe and crackling flames were heard on every side.

Two more *launches* had arrived, and attracted by our camp fire, hauled in to the neighboring shore. One of these parties came from the bay, or *from below*, as they term it, and their appearance confirmed the impression that they were from *below*, in more senses than one. Dressed in discolored red shirts, their ugly and dirty faces peered with cunning impudence from beneath flaming red flannel caps, which, from their shape, might be the camp pudding-bags; around their waists circled greasy leathern belts, in which revolved, at ease, a wooden-handled sheath-knife, used to blood of man and beast; while leaping through the flames of their camp fire with hideous yells, they completed the evidence of their demoniac origin or destiny, we would not like to say which. Suffice it to say, that they were from New South Wales, which was already pouring its refuse population into the "lovely valley of the Sacramento."

The other party were direct from the gold mines, or *placeres*, and were returning to San Francisco with the proceeds of their *washings* and *diggings* on the Yuba* River. These were hardy and quiet men, and though they had experienced their share of hardship and disease in the mines, seemed accustomed to these vicissitudes of frontier life, and well satisfied with the exchange of a portion of health for a portion of gold. One of them, an intelligent and educated Scotchman, gave us much interesting information as to *diggings on Yuba*. The most beautiful specimens of scale gold we saw came from that river. On some of the bars this gold was only obtained at the depth of ten to fifteen feet, but the *digger*

* Pronounced Juba.

was often rewarded for his toil by the richness of the deposits there.

We found these men true *cosmopolites*, ready to enter into conversation with all, furnishing all the information in their power in exchange for the latest news from the States. When informed of the election of General Taylor to the Presidency, they evinced a strange mixture of satisfaction and chagrin—of satisfaction at having another *old hero* and Indian fighter at the head of the government, and of chagrin that he was not elected by the democratic party; but finally concluded that it was "mighty likely he would turn out a *raal* democrat at last;" and we could not avoid hinting our belief that he would *turn out* a great many *at first*, at all events.

The *gold fever*, however, absorbed all other topics with us; and one of the party thrusting his bowie-knife into the ground, revealed innumerable shining yellow particles, immediately announcing gold discoveries on the Sacramento, and claiming the *placer*. This afforded much amusement to our friends the *diggers*, who soon convinced us that it was only mica or isinglass with which the soil is filled.

The evening was now far advanced, and turning to the smouldering embers of our camp-fire, we heaped on log after log, mingled with dry brushwood, and rolling up in our blankets and pilot coats, were soon fast asleep; some in the tent, others lulled to repose by the side of the humming and genial fire, while its light revealed the dim outlines of the neighboring camps with the dark forms of their slumbering groups.

At earliest dawn all were again astir, and after the indispensable, and, to us, most intricate duties of cookery, were again accomplished, and our breakfast demolished, we proceeded with great celerity to *break up camp*. This was soon effected, and tent, blankets, pots, kettles, pans, crowbar, and axe dis-

appeared, to enact their part in other scenes; the half-burned logs with lazy smoke, alone remaining to indicate our deserted camp.

Now commenced the tedious and laborious operation of *warping* through the *slough*, rendered necessary by the strength of a current like a mill-race. This process of course devolved on the crew; but for the sake of our own progress, as well as to aid them, we took turns in lending a hand to the ropes. Two of the sailors taking a canoe and coil of strong rope, paddle near the shore, a distance along which they judge their line will extend to the vessel. Making securely fast to an old stump, or the trunk or limb of a tree, close to the water's edge, they return rapidly down the stream, unreeving the rope, taking care that it does not get foul either of trees or half-sunken snags. Reaching the vessel, the line is there seized by all hands, and with a *yo heave O*, she is slowly and steadily warped up stream, accidents from snags, shoals, and overhanging trees, frequently occurring, a gentle spice to the patience of the crowd.

As all did not engage in this agreeable exercise at once, the remainder of our party, equipped for a tramp on shore, fully prepared with double-barrel and rifle, for birds, deer, or grizzly bears. Leaving the openings of the wood, some waded along the edge of the *tule* in search of ducks or geese, while others plunging into the frequent thickets kept the river bank, crossing many little creeks and wet ravines in quest of snipe or other close game. We thus obtained, in the course of the morning, a few specimens of *blue-winged teal*, or wood-duck, and some of the larger tribe of black ducks; but were too late in the day for the wild geese which we heard in immense numbers at daybreak. Deer are found chiefly in the mountains, and the grizzly bears do not fre-

quent the valley till later in the season, when acorns are ripe.

After a ramble of eight miles, or thereabout, we found ourselves at the head of the *cut-off*, or island at the beginning of the *slough*, and again at the main river. Here the banks were more elevated and cleared, and near the head of the island we discovered a log cabin, or rancho. Observing a tall, sinewy backwoodsman engaged in scraping the hair from a deer skin, on the end of a log hard by the cabin, we approached and had a grand confab with him. He informed us that we were at "Barber's Ranche." He was one of two brothers of that name, who, with their father, had squatted on this island and the one opposite, which appeared a more desirable location even than this. In the summer of last year, when the gold was first discovered, they were thriving mechanics at Monterey. Deserted by all their apprentices, and finding it impossible to obtain others, they were obliged to follow the tide of adventurers to the *placeres*, leaving the father at Monterey. Arrived at Feather River, one brother was immediately taken ill, and suffered a long time with the Sacramento fever, which was followed by a similar attack to the narrator. Both, however, were enabled eventually to dig, and after a few weeks more thus employed in obtaining gold, they returned from the mines, and selecting this island on the Sacramento, built their cabin. One brother was again suffering with the fever, while the one who stood before us was but a shadow. Yet these men, as this one informed us, had been roaming the prairies, and trapping in the Rocky Mountains for years, enjoying the full vigor of health. He boasted of having belonged to Fremont's battalion, and alluding to the hardships of that expedition, especially of the terrible Christmas night on the Santa Barbara Mountain, de-

scribed by Mr. Bryant in his book on California, he denounced the government for its neglect to pay off the men of that battalion, and vowed he would never go soldiering again. He alluded kindly to Col. Fremont, and professed to like him as an officer and a man. He also expressed a great desire to see Mr. Bryant's book, and reiterated his assertion that some of the men of that battalion ate *ten pounds* of beef in a single day; at the same time deliberately declaring his opinion that we could do so likewise under similar circumstances. This flattering conclusion was, no doubt, occasioned in his mind by our urgent desire to purchase his last quarter of venison, which hung most temptingly in sight. He ended the account of themselves, by asserting that their three little lots in Monterey, bought two or three years ago for a trifle, were now worth $16,000; which was no unreasonable supposition.

Observing a small plot of land broken up by the spade, we inquired as to its fertility, and were informed that the soil, though apparently a rich, black loam, is inferior for raising wheat and other grains, except where very highly manured. Their object in squatting here was, to cultivate vegetables for the supply of the emigrants on the river, and at the trading-posts; but their first attempt at this had not been very encouraging.

We of course received this statement with many grains of allowance, for their natural desire not to have too many neighbors and competitors. But from many other sources, including the experience of settlers of some years standing in the Valley of the Sacramento, this impression of the character of its soil was afterwards fully confirmed.

The climate, as it came under our observation, though more genial at this season than that of the coast, we found to be

very different from our anticipations. The sky, it is true, was at all times beautifully blue; the atmosphere wonderfully clear and dry; but the heat of the sun's rays from nine o'clock in the morning till three o'clock in the afternoon was intense; when the north-west wind from the ocean reaching the valley, it blew a steady breeze till ten or eleven o'clock at night, accompanied and follwoed by a fall in the thermometer nearly as great as at San Francisco; say as much at least as thirty degrees. The intense heat of the sun during the morning overhead, with the chill breath of the ice and snow-melted river, gave us most peculiar and disagreeable feelings; and these causes, combined with the malaria of the immense *tulare* marshes, and rapid fall of the streams in summer, must ever make the climate of the valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin dangerous to human life.

CHAPTER XV.

A Bath in the Sacramento—Party of Oregonians—Encampment—Early Rising—Otter—Rancheria of Walla-Wallas—Landing by Moonlight—Deserted Camp Ground—Magnificent Scene—Glory of the Moon and Stars—Sublime to Ridiculous—Fishing in the Sacramento—Salmon—Old Swartz—Lazy Indians—Russian Embarcadero—House of Keysburg, the Cannibal—a Race at Warping—Suttersville—Arrival at the Embarcadero.

WHILE waiting the arrival of the "Rainbow" at the head of the island, some of our number availed themselves of the opportunity to lave in the cold waters of the Sacramento. At this period of the year the water is very pure and delicious to drink, being cold as the ice of the Sierra Nevada, from which it is then supplied, and for this reason we generally preferred a shower bath to a plunge in the stream.

As the day wore away without the schooner's arrival, our only chance for food was to retrace our steps down the banks of the *slough*. Here we met a party of Oregonmen on their way up from San Francisco in a whale-boat, which they had sold to one of our number for the moderate sum of $300. Some of these men had just arrived from the Columbia River, but others had been some time at the mines. They were much dissatisfied with the climate and country of California, and avowed their determination not to settle here, but to return to their beloved Oregon, of which they gave most

glowing accounts. Among them was Mr. Canfield, one of the few who escaped from the massacre of the Rev. Mr. Whitman's family by the Cayuse Indians. After exchanging news with them, we trudged four miles down the river ere we met the schooner, which had required all day to be warped the same distance.

Gladly we aided in fixing our encampment for the night, and enjoyed our supper of fried pork and bread with a *gusto* which the pale and delicate frequenters of Delmonico's might in vain aspire to. Rising at two o'clock in the morning, or rather of the night, two of our party renewed the camp-fire, and commenced preparations for breakfast; for, "be it known unto all 'female women' by these presents," that our combined efforts in this early stage of our experience, required three full hours to produce an undoubted fry for all the party, and a kettle of aromatic coffee, whose clear surface would honestly reveal two well-burnt faces of red-nosed, anxious cooks. If, alas, however, after all our efforts, the grounds wouldn't sink to the bottom, despair sat throned upon our brow, because we were certain of a row with the "waiters."

Resuming our slow progress, we reached the termination of the *slough* at the close of this "our fourth day out;" where, entering upon the main river, we took again a fine breeze, and with studdin'-sails alow and aloft, the graceful "Rainbow" dashed once more the spray from her bow like vapor dispelled from the cloud crowned by her beauteous namesake in the sky. The last rays of the setting sun this day marked with their fleeting presence two events as fleeting as they—the least romantic of which was of greatest moment to us. This was no other than the sudden and irrecoverable disappearance of our best little axe over the side—an article

which a man need only pass one day in the wilderness without, to know the full importance of. While mourning in helpless regret over the catastrophe, *Otter! otter!* was shouted by Skipper Smith; and turning our eyes quickly to the shore, we saw the sleek little fellow swimming for dear life under the bending bank, and finally dive to a place of refuge known only to himself.

Before it was quite dark we also passed a *rancheria*, or Indian village on the right bank of the river, consisting of some ten or twelve round and rudely-thatched huts. These were tenanted by a portion of the Walla-Walla Indians, who came over the mountains from Oregon a few years ago. Among them we saw a pretty squaw named Mary, an acknowledged belle at Sutter's Fort.

At nine o'clock, the wind dying away, we landed by the light of the moon in a fine open space on the right bank of the river. Here we found a deserted old camp ground, and building our fire against two immense prostrate and partly burned trunks of trees, we pitched our tent before it. The scene here was beautiful and picturesque in the extreme. In the background appeared the green shores of the river, skirted with tall, isolated trees; the bright moon reflected on the bosom of the gleaming Sacramento, revealed our pretty little schooner nestled among the overhanging branches; while the forked and crackling flames of our camp fire cast their lurid glare upon our white walled tent and busy groups. Beyond all, stretched away the beautiful open prairie, with the towering forms of the Sierra Nevada in the far distance, mingling their snow-clad summit with the clouds; while in the foreground and but half within the gloaming, the blasted form of an old monarch of the plain lifted its charred branches high in air, holding in their loftiest eyrie the home of the dauntless eagle.

The purity of the atmosphere and the glory of the moon and stars exceeded anything we had ever beheld; shining with wonderful brightness from the midst of the azure vault, disclosing etherial fields of illimitable space: while the skies by day presented the most beautiful tints, blending gradually and imperceptibly to the horizon. Delighted with the magnificence of the night, and wild, strange aspect of the surrounding scene, we retired at a late hour to our repose, on the bosom of kind old mother earth, filled with an absorbing sense of the beautiful in nature.

Here the rapid descent from the sublime to the ridiculous was fully realized. Ten men, mostly six-footers, with here a little fat Falstaff, and there a spoiled and wheezy specimen, with disabled palate, occupied the ten feet square within the tent; while uneasy, in a canvas hammock aloft, from the tent poles, hung an unshaven and unshriven specimen of humanity, more between heaven and earth than he ever hopes to be again. The squirming attempts at trim "stowage in the hold" were ludicrous in the extreme; while the centre of *gravity* of him in the hammock was nowhere to be found. Finally, snoring was interdicted, except to the man without a palate, and all insiders were specially charged not to turn over without general notice.

The wind failing in the morning, we tried our luck at fishing in the Sacramento, and procured a number of small and delicious fish, resembling the trout of our mountain streams, but more bony. Salmon are said to abound also in this river, and we saw them frequently leaping up the stream. The Indians fish for them with seines, but are too lazy to obtain more than will supply their own wants.

Resuming our voyage we passed one day the rancho of old Schwartz on the left bank, a strange and eccentric specimen,

well known as a *character* in California. Near his cabin we spied some of the civilized Indians, and hailed them for salmon, but in vain; as they were quite too lazy to move from their sunning process on the sloping bank.

As the afternoon progressed we came in sight of the Russian Embarcadero. The stream is very wide below this point, and immediately opposite to it sweeps off to the left hand, forming a perfect right angle, resembling an immense canal. A considerable trade in hides, tallow and furs, was formerly carried on by the Russians here, with their trading post called Sitka, on the northwest coast, but the old building here is no longer occupied by them; changing our course at this bend, the wind before fair, was now dead ahead, and "luff, luff, all you can," was the order, but without avail; for we gradually hugged the shore and laid up for the night.

Within half a mile of our encampment, we saw the house of old Keysburg, the Cannibal, who revelled in the awful feast on human flesh and blood, during the sufferings of a party of emigrants near the pass of the Sierra Nevada in the winter of 1847: a painfully interesting description of which we received from the lips of our late lamented friend, John Sinclair, Esq., at whose house on the American River, the survivors of the party were received and entertained. A full and accurate account of these events have been furnished to the public by Mr. Bryant.

It is said that the taste which Keysburg then acquired has not left him, and that he often declares with evident gusto, "I would like to eat a piece of you;" and several have sworn to shoot him, if he ventures on such *fond* declarations to them. We therefore looked at the den of this wild beast in human form with a good deal of disgusted curiosity, and kept our bowie-knives handy for a slice of him, if necessary.

The following day being Sunday, and the beginning of the sixth day of the week since we left San Francisco, we continued our progress, but were obliged to warp through the *reach*, as these singular bends in the river are called. As there were several other launches, filled with Mexicans, Australians, and Frenchmen, in a like predicament, we had an exciting and ludicrous race at warping. We obtained and kept the lead a long time, but all the vessels were frequently getting on snags, or foul of trees. On several of these occasions we gained rapidly on the others, the wet rope swaying through our hands with an " O yes, Oh," on the lightning-rod principle ; but finally our turn came to hug a snag, too, and the dirty-faced Sidney crew offered to carry letters for us to the Embarcadero, which we replied to, by suggesting to send up a rope with a noose for each of them. This sally seemed to choke them off with unpleasant recollections.

With a fair wind we reached Suttersville at noon. Alongside the bank two storeships were moored, and having some freight for that of Messrs. George McDougall & Co., we went on board of her and thence on shore, here we saw Captain McDougall, late of one of the Indiana regiments in Mexico, and Mr. George McKinstry, and received much polite attention and information from these gentlemen. Suttersville at this time consisted of several houses, built, and in process of erection near the river. The location is very pretty, and is higher than the shores along the rivers generally. Some two or three hundred yards back, the country rises still more, and here, on a beautiful green bank, is a substantial and neat brick house, constructed from California brick, a kiln of which is near at hand. They were making a road from this place to connect it with Sutter's Fort, and the road to the mines ; and it will no doubt be a convenient distributing point for traders

and emigrants to the *placeres* on the American River. Passing a beautiful natural park or oak opening on the left bank of the river, we came in sight of the long-looked-for Embarcadero.

This famous landing is situated at the mouth of American River, and to all practical intents and purposes, at the head of navigation on the Sacramento. Speculators, however, have located *cities* which are a caution to grizzly bears, eighty miles higher up the stream. Two of these cities are opposite to each other, straight as a bee line, and it has not been decided yet which of them is the head of navigation. That fact will depend entirely upon the price of lots. Here also ground for universities has been *reserved*, and the learned fiat has gone forth:

This classic shade,
No digger's spade,
Shall e'er invade,
It shant.

Nor grizzly bar,
Shall revel thar,
Nor anywhar,
He cant.

For which see,
Lines on a tree.

Hauling the "Rainbow" up to the high bank among huge sycamore trees, we waded ashore on a wet plank with one end on board, the other at the edge of the water. Thus we had made the trip through the bays and up the Sacramento to this point, in exactly five days, having encamped four nights on shore. This was considered a favorable run, and we were

the first to arrive, out of all our fellow-passengers in the "Oregon."

We found several launches discharging freight and passengers, the latter being obliged, many of them to wade back and forth through the icy waters of the river, carrying their luggage of every kind on their backs. In an old board shantee and cook shop, on the shore, we obtained, for one dollar and a half each, a piece of beef and cup of tea, *both* of which we concluded were of the growth of California. We now employed our leisure in reflections upon our late journey; and certainly remembered the beautiful scenery of the broad and winding Sacramento with delight. Thus ended Easter Sunday, the 8th of April, in El Dorado, where neither almanacs nor calendars were known or consulted.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sacramento City—Sutter's Fort—Indians—California Horses—Oregon Teams—Encampment—Camp Guard—Coyotes—Wild Geese—Start for the Mines.

Sacramento City lies at the junction of the American River with the Sacramento, and includes in its plan Sutter's Fort and the surrounding land. At the junction of the rivers, however, were built the most of the houses and shops, at the time of our visit, some fifty in all. The bank of the river here is quite bold, but seems to be made ground, as the country back of it where the town is located is much lower.

The American River at its mouth is a slugglish and narrow but deep stream, and along its margin, as also some quarter of a mile on that of the Sacramento, extends a belt of tall but scraggy sycamore and white oak timber. Besides the traders' stores and houses scattered here, are many tents, which are continually appearing and disappearing, as their owners arrive and depart for the mines.

Pitching our tent on the borders of the American River, we found ourselves surrounded by Peruvians, Chilians, Mexicans, Kanakas and our own countrymen; as well as Europeans of every kind, class and description. All were hand and glove, and the salutation of "how are you, gentlemen," was universal. Convicts whose term had expired in Botany Bay,

educated Americans and Europeans, or Kanakas fresh from Honolulu, were all on equal footing here.

The latter, who are the natives of the Sandwich Islands, are a remarkably intelligent and amiable race. Amphibious from childhood, they furnish excellent sailors to our whaling fleet in the Pacific, and are apt to acquire every species of knowledge. Liked by all whom they come in contact with, they are universal favorites.

Early in the morning succeeding our arrival, we "toted" our chattels on shore, in the midst of a scene of general confusion; and borrowing a pair of platform scales worth $1000 here, we weighed our freight and settled our enormous bill with the skipper. We now employed the time in arranging our luggage and freight for transportation in the gold region. Several opened their trunks and disposed of surplus articles to straggling diggers from the mines at enormous prices. A six barreled revolver, or six shooter, as the mountaineers termed it, sold for $100, and the smallest size Colt's Pocket Revolver was exchanged for $50 of the yellow dust. Well pleased with these illustrations of Californian prices we packed our wagons and made other necessary arrangements for immediate departure.

The same afternoon we reached the famous Sutter's Fort. Emerging from the timber, we found ourselves on the edge of a most beautiful plain, covered with verdant grass, perfectly level, and surrounded on three sides with the green enclosure of the same species of trees. Cattle and horses feeding in every direction, and the white tents clustered about the low walls of the distant fort, forcibly reminded us of the primitive simplicity of pastoral life. In the midst of this scene, and at the distance of two miles, appeared the fort; yet so *wonderful* is the *purity* of the atmosphere, that we

could not persuade ourselves to believe it to be more than half a mile from us. Crossing a wide and deep ditch, through which the well-beaten road is worn, we soon entered the fort by the southern gateway. Here we found ourselves within an immense court, and none of the cleanest either, corresponding much more with our ideas of an eastern caravansary, than of a fort. About one hundred and fifty yards in length by fifty in width, the four sides consist of two *adobe* or mud walls, the outer wall fifteen, and the inner one ten feet in height or thereabouts. A space of perhaps twenty-five feet was left between these, and the whole was roofed and partitioned, or divided by similar walls into apartments of various size, now occupied as stores, blacksmith-shop, bakery, billard-room, bowling-alley, etc., and besides the southern gate, there was a similar one at the eastern end. The outer walls were not pierced for musketry or mounted with cannon, the purposes of defence against the simple warfare of the Indians being fully answered by bastions, the guns from which entirely commanded the walls. On the southern side and eastern end of the fort, there is a large *corral* or enclosure of mud walls for horses.

Opposite the southern gate, within the enclosure and connected with the northern side, is a substantial house with a basement and story above. This was formerly the residence of Capt. Sutter, and very comfortable, though, of course, not very elegant.

Built by the labor of Indians, under the direction of Capt. Sutter, and an active and intelligent assistant, named Bray, a "gintleman of the ould counthry," the fort with its appointments, and the carpenter's, joiner's, and smith's work, is said to have cost as many dollars as it contains *adobes* or sun-dried bricks. The Indians had to be supplied with finery and with

food, and the only source from whence to obtain supplies of all needed articles (except food) at that time, was the trading post of the Russian Fur Company, and at enormous prices.

The scene described by an eye-witness of the feeding of these two or three hundred Indians, morning and evening, must have been sufficiently degrading, according to ideas of civilized life, and yet it was a great improvement upon their mode of living. Long troughs inside the walls were filled with a kind of boiled mush made of the wheat bran ; and the Indians huddled in rows upon their knees before these troughs, quickly conveyed their contents by the hand to the mouth. But few of these Indians now remain about the fort, or make their appearance, being scattered and rendered useless by the present state of affairs in the country. Some are employed still in servile capacities, but they appear to be of little use except as *vaqueros* or keepers of horses and cattle. We saw one of the most expert of these *vaqueros* scouring the plain, mounted on a fleet horse, driving the others under his charge into the *corral* for the night. Covered with a gay *serape* or Mexican blanket, his appearance while careering over the ground at full speed of his horse, was the very beau ideal of natural grace and reckless daring.

We had heretofore read such glowing descriptions of the California horses, that we were now greatly disappointed in their appearance. In color generally white or bay, they are small in size, and mostly devoid of graceful or fine points. Light and muscular, and trained only to the saddle, they have great powers of endurance, and will travel in a day double the distance accomplished by our horses, with half the fatigue. Accustomed only to the natural gait of the wild horse—the gallop, or *lope*, as it is here called—used to cruel spurs and a powerful bit, and guided by the gentle pressure of the rein to

the side of the neck, they are the best hunters probably in the world. In general appearance they will not compare with the American horse, nor at all equal him on the farm or in the team.

For the purpose of our journey to the mountains, we had obtained Oregon teams of oxen, six fine steady fellows to each wagon. Many yoke of these were then employed in this business, and with enormous profits to their owners, freight being from $30 to $40 per 100 lbs. for the trip of fifty miles. We were, however, so fortunate as to pay *only* $20, which was one advantage in being ahead of the crowd of our passengers per steamer.

As night closed soon after we reached the fort, we determined to remain there, and take a fresh start in the morning. Anxious to see and become acquainted with Capt. Sutter, we learned on inquiry that he had gone up to the mountains to have *a talk* with the Indians. He resides now at his farm on Feather River, having sold the fort to the different traders and others who occupy it. At the period of the gold discovery, he had sufficient wheat growing to produce 40,000 bushels. Instead of employing his friendly Indians to dig gold for him, he persevered in saving his wheat, and though he finally accomplished this with much trouble and great expense, he was obliged to abandon most of it to decay in the sheaf for want of laborers. He has, however, since that period, realized a fortune from sales of his property of Sacramento City, much to the gratification of his innumerable friends. We found his old residence in the fort owned and occupied by Mr. McClellan and family, from Jackson County, Missouri. Emigrating across the Sierra Nevada, Rocky Mountains, and vast prairies of the West during the previous season, he had arrived here in the *niche of time*, and disposing of his wagons and

oxen at gold diggers' prices, commenced with the rest of his traps and several fine milch cows, to keep a regular boarding house in the fort. In this we found him ably seconded by wife and daughters, the latter of whom had endured the hardships and performed the camp duties of their great overland journey during the illness of their mother. Here we obtained a fine supper and breakfast of beefsteaks, fresh bread and butter, besides tea and coffee, with delicious milk; all of which were highly appreciated after feeding on hard bread and salt junk.

We now pitched our tent, and encamped for the night outside the fort and close to our wagon, the remainder of our fellow travellers being encamped some five miles in advance. Soon after nightfall, some of the prowling vagabonds about the fort, had the audacious villany to steal a fine horse, which the owner had just dismounted from, within the walls. Obtaining another, he quickly went in search of the thief, and whether he found him or not we never learned; but, if he did, death was his portion, powder and ball being judge and jury in the common law of California applied to such cases. This incident determined the majority of our party to keep a camp-guard for the protection of our property during the night.

Engaged in this duty much against our individual opinions and inclinations, three or four of our number turned sentry, two or three hours each. The night was clear, but cold; and though the rainy season had not long terminated, there was a heavy dew. Wrapped in a faithful pilot coat, we were ruminating upon the stars, or the lumps of gold in prospect, while attached to the end of a long *lariat* in hand, our worthy pack-horse ruminated upon the grass. A burst of loud laughter, in the direction of the fort, aroused our vigilance; and

turning sharply around, we demanded the password from the daring intruders. *Roast onions*, or *whiskey punch*, we forget which, was given, and they were permitted to pass the lines without being fired upon. They proved to be some of our newly-made friends in the fort, who had heard of our proceedings, and come down to see the fun, and returned some newspapers loaned them. If the sleepers within the tent did not awake by our merriment, it was only because the resounding woods were a little too far off to return the echo.

When left to the silence of night, and pursuing the sentry's "lonely round," we heard the frequent bark of the *coyote*, or small prairie wolf of California, which abounds throughout the valley of the Sacramento. Sometimes they approached within a few rods; and nothing but the desire to preserve the slumber of our tired comrades, prevented us from treating the rascals to the contents of a double-barrel. Horses staked out with the leather or hide *lariats*, are often set free by the gnawing teeth of these *coyotes;* but they are not so apt to sever the *lariats* made of hair.

As the day dawned, the plain was covered with flocks of wild geese rising in every direction; but our active duties, preparatory to a start prevented any sport. One very large and fat specimen, obtained the evening previous, we now prepared for a future meal. We also laid in a supply of pork and other necessaries for the journey.

Previous to departure, one of our esteemed companions, who had undertaken the journey to the mines only from curiosity or love of adventure ascertained that the hardship of the travel in the mountains would be greater than he had anticipated and therefore resolved to return to San Francisco in the snug little cabin of the "Rainbow." Recovering his blanket, which had been packed away with sundry others, he

bade us adieu, much to our regret, though, as it proved, judiciously enough, for the fatigue would have overpowered him. Many others have doubtless been as unfit to proceed, but lacked moral courage to return.

We now took our start in earnest for the *placeres*, with the luggage of four of our number on a large double-farm wagon, drawn by six oxen, driven by a stout young Oregonian. We had purchased the day before, a good pack-mare, for $200, (formerly worth $10,) and one bestrode Jenny Lind, as we named her, while the remainder tramped off on *shanks' mare*.

CHAPTER XVII.

American River—Drowning Horses—Leidesdorff's Rancho—Talk with Captain Sutter—Encampment at Green Spring—The Blue Tent—"Digger" Indians—Wild Flowers of the Prairie.

FOLLOWING the course of the American River, we struck into the beaten road towards the northeast, and were soon upon the open prairie and up with the advance party. Our cavalcade was now quite considerable, composed of three heavily-laden wagons, drawn by eighteen oxen, accompanied by five horsemen and twelve pedestrians. We were surprised at the rapid gait and perfect training of the oxen, but this they had acquired in their long journey across the western prairies. The driver of our team was a slow and sure, stout and steady young man from Oregon, named Harrison; his immense head of fiery red hair seemed, however, to belong nowhere but in Yorkshire. We soon found he had no love for Indians, as they once captured him in the Rocky Mountains, stripped and bound him to a tree, and some sudden alarm alone saved him from torture and death. No doubt the rascals thought a scalp, red both outside and in, would be a fine appendage to their collection of similar curiosities.

As the morning advanced we were glad to throw off our coats, and becoming tired of double barrels where we saw no

game, they were also soon sticking out of our wagons "seven ways for Sunday." With pantaloons tucked inside of our boots, hunter fashion, coats off and beards on of some weeks growth, contrasted with countenances of the Kanaka hue, we were certainly a most uncouth-looking party, and verily "a sight for to see." We had grand masters and patriarchs enough, to have formed an Ancient and Independent Order of Loafers.

Our road for some miles lay along the borders of the American River. After passing the former rancho of the late John Sinclair, Esq., we found the soil to be nothing but a deep fine sand slightly mixed with loam. Below this some twenty feet or more, perpendicular, is the bed of the river, distinctly seen through the clear waters which roll their beautiful current over it, sometimes still, placid and deep, at others rushing along with impetuous force. The spring floods were not yet at their greatest height, and the stream appeared only twenty or thirty yards in width, yet the overhanging banks worn away by its perpetual energy were evidently in a continual state of transition. This leaves frequent bars on the opposite side where the shores are much lower, and no doubt they contain some portions of gold. The land on that side of the river is also said to be more capable of cultivation and of irrigation.

We witnessed here an animated but unpleasant spectacle. Some fifty or sixty horses had been driven into the stream to swim across it, at a point just above a strong rapid. Into this they had been unfortunately swept by the current or by taking a wrong direction, and the poor creatures were struggling and snorting in affright, unable to stem the rapids, or to gain a footing on the precipitous banks. Several were entangled in the strong thicket growing in the edge of the stream, and

one poor fellow had resigned himself to his fate. Meantime the *vaquero* sat on his horse upon a small island higher up, in mute despair, unable to render any assistance; and many of them must have undoubtedly drowned.

Continuing our progress we arrived at noon at Leidesdorff's Rancho, situated on the American River, ten miles beyond the fort. Built of logs and *adobes*, it is a plain, substantial house with several out buildings, and is now occupied by a Mr. Kelly and another family, a mother and daughter; the latter a widow and apparently only about fourteen years old. Her husband was shot the previous winter at San Francisco. The mother invited one of our party to accept the hospitality of her house and remain till the next morning, but seeing only one sleeping apartment which was also the dining room, he politely declined.

While resting here and refreshing ourselves with hard bread and the cold river water, we had the gratification of seeing Captain Sutter and party ride up. He was accompanied by H. R. Schoolcraft, Esq., Chief Alcalde of Sacramento City, and Captain Smith, a Virginia gentleman, for many years resident in Peru, who was at the head of a party engaged in extensive operations at the Mormon Islands on the American River. There were also with them several Indian attendants, and all on horseback, the only legitimate mode of travelling in California. One of our number was furnished with a letter of introduction to Captain Sutter from a gentleman in San Francisco, but we soon found such formality quite unnecessary with him, as he quickly manifested in himself the character of a perfect and most courteous gentleman of the old European military school; possessed of all its politeness, ease and dignity, without its usual hauteur. He had just returned from a tour among the different *Rancherias* of Indians

in the mountains, and appointed a *talk* with them, to be held in a few days, and which he invited us to attend. He gave us much interesting information about the Indians in the valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin. When he first settled in California he had much trouble with them, but he adopted, and has pursued steadily from the first, a policy of peace, combined with the requisite firmness and occasional severity. Thus he had obtained all-powerful influence with them, and was enabled to avail himself of their labor for moderate remuneration. Now all was changed: the late emigrants across the mountains, and some Oregon trappers and mountaineers, had commenced a war of extermination upon them, shooting them down like wolves, men, women, and children, wherever they could find them. Some of the Indians were undoubtedly bad and needed punishment, but generally the whites were the aggressors; and as a matter of course the Indians retaliated whenever opportunities occurred; and in this way several unarmed or careless Oregonians had become, in turn, their victims. Thus has been renewed in California the war of extermination against the aborigines, commenced in effect at the landing of Columbus, and continued to this day, gradually and surely tending to the final and utter extinction of the race. And never has this policy proved so injurious to the interests of the whites, as in California.

The profitable trade with them in exchange for their gold dust is entirely at an end. Their labor once very useful, and, in fact, indispensable, in a country where no other species of laborers were to be obtained at any price, and which might now be rendered of immense value by pursuing a judicious policy, has been utterly sacrificed by this extensive system of indiscriminate revenge.

Bidding farewell to this extraordinary pioneer in the New World on the Pacific, we again took up our line of march for the *diggins*. The prairie now became rolling and gradually ascending, indicating our nearer approach to the mountains of the *gold region*. At sunset we called a halt, and leaving our wagons in close proximity, untackled the weary cattle to graze at freedom on the surrounding herbage, carefully staking our horses for a similar purpose for the night.

For the latter process there is a right way and a wrong way, or rather many wrong ways, as is the case with all the doings of that wise and conceited animal called man. The ladies need not indulge in any innocent exultation at this remark, for we use the term in its generic sense. The stake, then, twelve or eighteen inches in length, must be driven in the ground at an angle of forty-five degrees and close down, with a hook or nub on the end, so that the *lariat* or rope cannot extract it while the horse is feeding.

Our encampment this night was in a hollow between two hills, called *Green Spring*, as the little mud hole so denominated was in the midst of a patch of greener or more abundant grass than usual. We had much difficulty in finding enough wood for cooking purposes, but finally succeeded in picking up sufficient from the remains of other camp-fires. Having accomplished a distance of twenty miles, we fastened our cattle up to the wheels of the wagons to prevent their straying, and after a hearty supper were quickly fast asleep in our blankets; but the night was cold, and we felt the want of our camp-fires on the Sacramento.

At daylight we resumed our journey, and proceeding three miles, stopped by another spring, and enjoyed our breakfast on the green grass, in the brisk morning air, and with keen appetites.

Towards noon of this day we reached a log-house, which is a general stopping place on this route to the mountains. A *blue tent* was first pitched here, and the spot has been called by that appellation ever since. A small stream of pure water trickles by the door down into the adjoining meadow. The house is owned and occupied by a western farmer with his family. He keeps a bar and small shop, and the wife provides meals for those who call for them. This man arrived in California before the gold discoveries, and acquiring the language of the Indians, he pursued a friendly policy towards them—employed them to dig gold for him, superintending them in person, and is said to have acquired in this, and in other ways, some $200,000.

While here, some twenty warriors came in from a neighboring *rancheria*, following each other in regular Indian file across the hill side. These were a part of one of the numerous small tribes of Californian Indians called "Diggers." This name they have received as characteristic of their habits either of digging large holes in the ground for sanitory purposes, called *sweat houses*, or from their custom of digging and eating various kinds of roots. They also eat a species of grass and wild clover when prompted by hunger; their principal food, however, consists of acorns, and preparations from them. These are very abundant, and we found them quite sweet and palatable. This race of Indians is probably inferior to all others on the continent. Many of them are diminutive in stature, but they do not lack muscular strength, and we saw some who were tall and well-formed. These were all partially clad in every kind of *toggery* obtained at the trading posts, and armed with short bows, lined very skilfully with raw hide, hard as bone, and capable of propelling their arrows with great force and precision. The Indians

of the mountains are not so well clothed, and we saw them entirely naked. Their complexion is a dark mahogany, or often nearly black, their faces round or square, with features approximating nearer to the African than the Indian. Wide, enormous mouth, noses nearly flat, and hair straight, black, and coarse as that of a horse's mane, but without gloss, growing often over their low foreheads, and small, gleaming eyes, complete the description of these revolting specimens of humanity. Possessed of mean, treacherous, and cowardly traits of character, and the most thievish propensities, they are probably the worst subjects for the moulding hand of civilization. Yet Capt. Sutter's judicious policy has accomplished wonders among large numbers of them, which, consisting of several tribes, are known as Sutter's Indians. The great mass of them known as wild Indians, exist entirely in the mountains, and about the head waters of the Sacramento.

One of the party at the Blue Tent displayed about a quarter of an ounce of gold dust tied up in a rag, for which he wanted to trade, and soon struck a bargain with one of our party for a white shirt, or *comisa blanca*, using the Spanish language to denominate all things before unknown to them. While producing this from our wagon, the *Alcalde* of their tribe came up, and with a look of hatred, and a few Indian words, stopped the trade. This fellow was tall and well-formed, with better features and lighter complexion, but a demoniac countenance. He wore a red Mexican sash as a symbol of his authority, and of which he was extremely vain. No doubt he told his warriors we were cheating them, for they displayed many revengeful symptoms.

After obtaining some refreshment here we continued our journey, and in passing over the rolling prairies and hills, were amazed and delighted with the great variety and beauty

of the wild flowers, exceeding all we had ever beheld in garden or green house. On the level prairies they usually grow in distinct fields or patches of each kind of flower, but here in the wild profusion of Paradise, ere blessed with Eve's more nurturing care, were white, blue, and violet, the orange and lemon fading into the liquid hue of the amber, the Tyrian purple and soft lilac, the deep crimson, bright scarlet, and modest pink, blended beautifully with the verdant grass, and filling the air with their delightful fragrance. We recognised the wild narcissus, tulip and hyacinth, and a trumpet-shaped lilac flower, with leaves alternately rounded or oval, and pointed, with a velvet streak of deep purple in the centre of each. Filling our hat bands with these gorgeous plumes, we looked like fitting followers of Fra Diavolo, and wished that wives, mothers and sisters, were there to see.

CHAPTER XVIII.

California Mountains—Views from their Summits—Lovely Mountain Valley—Picturesque Camp—California Quail—Hare—Antelope—Black Tail-Deer—Weber's Creek—William s Rancho—Arrival at the Culoma Mills.

LEAVING the forks of the road where it diverges towards the first *diggings*, at Mormon Islands on the American River, the rolling prairie which we had hitherto traversed, now gradually broke into steep hills, covered only with grass or occasional rocks near the top. The toiling oxen, with patient steps, pursued their weary way; and the scene was rendered more picturesque by our straggling train of teams and wagons, horse and foot, alternately climbing or descending the hills.

We passed on our journey many travellers to the mines from all parts of the world—some shouldering heavy burdens of provisions and clothing, and all with a gold-washer or jingling-pan of some kind or other. Frequently we saw these poor fellows, exhausted with heat and fatigue, lying in forlorn groups in some welcome shade, or sharing their hard bread and jerked beef. These were, however, just the men for the gold regions of California, having, under monarchical governments, been accustomed to dig or starve, or *generally* both, while here it was only dig or die, and *sometimes* both.

We also met many diggers returning from the mines, ill or feeble, disappointed or satisfied with their *pile of dust*. Many were leaving because the waters were too high; others going to other *diggings*, or in quest of fresh provisions, or medical aid to cure them from the scurvy or the fever. From all we received the most contradictory accounts—some stating that the gold was abundant, and good health prevailing at the mines, and others exactly the reverse.

As we approached the mountains, the scenery became more diversified. The small valleys lying at the base of the hills, and the gently-sloping declivities were covered with beautiful groves of white and live oak, resembling in their clear, open vistas, the seeming regularity of extensive orchards. This white oak appears to be altogether inferior to our noble tree and fine timber of that species. It is here low, scraggy, and with wide-spreading branches, the largest of which often were snapped asunder, indicating a soft and brittle wood, which, on trial, we found to be the case. The tree here called live oak is, also, very different from that of our forests. Evidently an evergreen oak, it is short in the stem and covered with many small branches, but less spreading than those of the white oak.

Passing one of these little nooks among the hills, we espied a deserted wagon, full of valuable merchandise. Wondering at this, we turned aside to ascertain the cause, and found a piece of paper on the wagon tongue, on which was legibly but rudely written, "Will some kind person stay by my wagon, I am in distress, looking for my oxen. Please do not take anything, for I am poor, and the property is not mine." The simplicity of the appeal seemed to have been quite effective, for all appeared unmolested; and one after another of our party remained with it as we came up, until the last comer entrusted his charge to some new arrival.

Early in the morning of this day, two of our number went up a ravine where was a little stream, for the purpose of *prospecting for gold*, which is the term applied in the *diggings* for gold-hunting, or seeking new and richer deposits. They, however, returned unsuccessful, as the stream at the point indicated was too high. The gentleman who accompanied them on this *detour* affords, in his own person, a striking instance of successful American enterprise. A native of Vermont, and educated in one of the colleges of that State, he acquired the profession of the law and removed to Mississippi, where, after raising and educating a family of sons and daughters, his health declined, and he resolved to emigrate to Oregon or California. His friends and relatives opposed his resolution, declaring his constitution incapable of sustaining him in so great an undertaking; but the power of a high-toned and vigorous intellect in a weak frame has often accomplished more than an ill-directed physical energy. With two sons he took his way across the prairies, each provided with a good ox-team, axe, and rifle. Arriving in California two years ago, in the full vigor of restored health, he has acquired a fortune, being part proprietor of the Culoma sawmill and other property. One of his sons was driving the team, and the other attending mill; and they had not heard from home for eighteen months previous to the establishment of the Pacific mail steamers.

We were now at the middle of our second day's journey, fairly across the valley of the Sacramento and in the California mountains. Turning to gaze upon the prospect before us, we beheld at our feet, as if displayed upon a map, the whole of this beautiful valley, its broad and winding river flashing in distant sunlight, while we were in shade. In the north, the clear Rio Americano rolled its tributary waters,

and on the west, the horizon was bounded by the coast range of hills, with Monte Diablo still conspicuous in the van. Resuming our journey, the blue mountains and alternate valleys of the California Range were before us, while at a distance of seventy or eighty miles, uprose the snow-crowned peaks of the Sierra Nevada, glittering like burnished silver in the sun, or lost to view amidst the purple clouds. Continuing our ascent, we found the mountains or rather succession of mountains broken in every direction by valleys, ravines and *gulches*, as the smaller ravines are here denominated. Thus there is a continual succession of mountain and valley, making the ascent gradual and much less laborious.

In the afternoon of this day, we entered a lovely little valley in the mountains, where we found plenty of wood for fuel and tent poles, and a clear little stream of water near at hand. Having travelled sixteen miles, we resolved to encamp early to afford our cattle a good rest, for the hardest part of the road was yet to be traversed, and we accordingly called a halt at this inviting spot.

Our camp here was picturesque in the extreme; besides white oak, live oak and other trees, the tall fir was pointing his top to the clouds all around us, while up the slope of the opposite hill was a beautiful clear lawn, commencing from the meandering brooklet at its base. With the wagons drawn in an angle, our tent was pitched near them, between two large fir-trees, and close at hand our camp-fire was blazing and crackling over a great bed of live coals, with a large old tree for a back log. The preparations for dinner and supper being completed, we all fell too with appetites of the California battalion; and seated, some on ox yokes, some on saddles, some on wagon tongues, and some on the ground, we did "equal and exact justice" to fried pork, boiled beans, hasty

MONTE DIABLO, NEAR SUISUN BAY.

slap-jacks and coffee, which, to our mind, outvied all the most brilliant results of Parisian skill; while on the margin of the brook our cattle were industriously grazing their fill. As darkness fell upon mountain and valley, we secured our oxen to the wagons, and staked our horses in camp; then, after repose and pleasant converse about "the girls we left behind us," we laid down to sleep under tent, tent-fly, and wagons, keeping no watch, but leaving our horses and cattle to the care of a large Newfoundland dog, certain that the contemptible race of thievish Indians would not venture to molest them.

Resuming our toilsome progress the following morning, the mountains now became more steep and rugged, so that sometimes it was with much difficulty we could prevent our heavily-laden wagons from overturning. It was an amusing spectacle to see three or four of us hold on with might and main, down a steep, sidelong declivity, or putting our shoulders to the wheel, aid poor Roebuck and Bright in rolling the heavy budget out of deep *gulches*, whence, often, unaided they could not budge it.

We now began to see many Californian quail, but had no time to bag any of them. They are smaller than our quail, and both their form and plumage bear some resemblance to the dove. Rabbits of very large size, and probably the same species as the English hare, were quite numerous among the underwood; and on the previous day we saw several of the fleet and graceful antelope feeding among the green hills. As these animals are said to be attracted by red colors, two of our party in red shirts endeavored to approach them to get a shot; for a little time the issue seemed doubtful, but suddenly snuffing the air, they bounded away with the fleetness of the wind. These beautiful creatures seem to belong

to the society of *Friends* among animals in California, for they always wear drab coats, and preserve perpetual peace in their roamings among the hills.

Crossing a deep ravine to-day, we heard the crack of a rifle twice repeated, and soon emerging from the gorge appeared a bronze and sturdy old hunter, with a large red deer bereft of head and hoofs, slung over his shoulders. His wagon was waiting in the road, and setting down his heavy rifle with the force of a small tree, he tumbled his prize into the wagon, declaring, with an oath, that "these yere Californy deare was the hardest to kill he ever seen. Shoot 'em twice, and then they won't die till you knife 'em." They are darker in color than our common red deer, larger and possessed of greater strength and fleetness, as well as tenacity of life. We saw them on every mountain top, leaping over rocks, crags, and brushwood, with incredible bounds. For expert hunters, there can be no finer game than the black-tailed deer of California.

As we penetrated farther up into the mountains, they became more precipitous and difficult, and our road wound through almost impenetrable thickets, which, interspersed with rock, clothed the rugged hills to their apex.

Crossing Weber's* Creek, we gazed with interest into the deep cañon from which it emerges; for here Mr. Weber, an old settler in the country, obtained large quantities of gold last season with the aid of his friendly Indians, and is now said to possess a *fanega* of gold dust, which is nearly two bushel. The occupant of the log cabin at this creek obtained $2500 from it near his house the past winter.

Our previous impressions of the volcanic structure of California now became forcibly renewed. Many of these de-

* Pronounced Weavers.

tached mountains bear distinctly the appearance of having once been volcanoes, or thrown up by volcanic action, and their broken and irregular forms and sterile aspect, further confirm this opinion The lines of deep quartz rock and soil of bright red sand clay, characteristic of this wonderful gold region, now surrounded us on every side, and we began to look forward to the speedy termination of our journey.

Towards noon we reached Williams's Rancho in the mountains. The owner of it has a *corral* for stray horses, and as he is very obliging and popular, his house is well known and frequented by his friends in these "*diggins.*"

Our frequent inquiries from returning miners elicited information that the waters were very high and yet rising on the forks, as the past winter was the most severe ever known here, snow four feet deep having fallen in the mountains, and some even on the coast; an occurrence not before known in the history of California. The old Californian or Spanish inhabitants charge the Americans with being the cause of this phenomenon, and the Indians in the valley believe so also, never having seen snow before, and not knowing what it was.

Commencing now our last descent of some two or three miles, we entered the valley though a deep gorge out of which the South Fork of the American River makes its way. Winding down the precipitous road we soon caught sight of tents like white specks among the trees, and in due time found ourselves in Saw Mill valley, now known as Marshall's, or "Culoma Mills," where the gold discoveries were first made in 1848. The road to these mills was far better than we expected. Such has been the rush of adventurers, that it is a hard beaten track, and better than most mountain roads in the United States. Our Nantucket friends now filed off to the borders of the stream above the village, but we continued on

with our wagon and halted in the midst of the valley, surrounded by tents, and log and frame houses and stores. Our oxen were soon untackled, and our load of 1800 lbs., deposited on the ground under a tree, for all of which service of transportation fifty miles, we paid our friend Harrison, the Oregon boy, $360.

Thus on the 12th of April, had we terminated our trip of six thousand miles, in sixty-seven days, of which we had only employed thirty-six days in actual travel.

CHAPTER XIX.

Culoma Valley—South Fork—Mill Race and first Gold Discoveries—Trading with the Miners—Old Greenwood and his Sons—A War Party and Indian Scalp—Sunday in the Valley—Indian Carouse.

The "Saw Mill," or Culoma Valley, is about three or four miles in circumference, surrounded on all sides by high mountain peaks, covered with fir trees and detached rocks. The bright red sandy clay soil is broken into *gulches* and ravines, which are filled with water during the rainy season. The whole of this formation is believed to contain gold, but thus far researches have only been made in the *gulches* and among the rocks. A silver mine believed to be of considerable value, has been found near this valley, but it is neglected for the gold. The level basin of the valley is of common yellow sand and pebble, entirely different from the composition of the mountains, and is covered only with a sprinkling of poverty grass.

Entering by a *cañon* of the mountain on the south-east, the South Fork pursues its way on one side of the valley, at the base of the high peak separating the South from the Middle Fork, and departs through another and deeper *cañon* at the north-west. It is a perfect mountain torrent, twenty to fifty yards wide, thundering over its rocky bed with noisy violence

at the rate of five or six miles per hour. A strong rope stretched across the stream where it is deeper and not so rapid, enables a large scow to be run across as a ferry boat. On that side of the fork the valley is soon hemmed in by the mountain, and only a few tents were scattered at its foot, but in the western and southern portion of the valley, were about fifty frame and log houses, and as many tents, which were weekly becoming more numerous.

At the north, or lower end of this beautiful and romantic valley, is situated the famous saw mill erected by direction of Captain Sutter, its machinery is of the most common kind adapted to water power, erected under an open shed over the race; and though it is called a slow mill, the net profit of a full day's work at the then price of lumber at the mill, ($400 per thousand,) was $1,000 per day. This valuable property now belongs to Mr. Marshall and a gentleman associated with him to whom we have before alluded. Mr. Marshall is a millwright, and a native of New Jersey, the good old "banner state" of the Revolution. We saw and conversed with him in relation to his discovery of the gold. The race is cut through a portion of the original bed of the stream, below its banks and opposite to a bend or curve which it makes towards the mountain. He pointed out to us the particular location of the first discoveries. This is some fifty yards below the mill where a large fir tree extends across the race. He stated that they threw up a good deal of gold mixed with the sand and clay before they seriously examined it, or ascertained its certain character. The loose nature of this sandy soil required both sides of the race to be lined with heavy plank to prevent it from again filling up.

On the margin of the race, and just below the mill, we pitched our tent under the shade of a scrub oak. We fixed

upon this spot in the midst of the sand and dust of the settlement, as it was the best place to traffic and dispose of our merchandise and surplus articles; for, like nearly all California adventurers, we had long since rued our great error in bringing so much baggage with us, and determined to carry it about no longer. One of our party had brought merchandise, but though the remainder had come only for the purpose of gold digging, and were of course anxious to proceed in their enterprise, yet it was impossible either to store the baggage or carry it with us.

Taking our tent-fly, we erected it in front of the tent, and placing a barrel under each of its four corners, laid boards upon them, thus having on each side a convenient counter for the display of our articles. To those who are unacquainted with camp equipage, we may explain that the tent-fly is a second roof usually erected over the tent. The one now in use we had made ourselves during our voyage, from materials obtained in Panama. Having completed these preliminary arrangements, we retired to rest, there being just sufficient room for that purpose between the piles of baggage arranged around the inside of the tent. Here we were soon lulled to repose by the babbling stream and steady music of the mill.

The following morning we awoke at daylight, quite chilled by the cold of the night, though furnished with warm clothing and several blankets, and by nine o'clock the heat of the sun was oppressive. As three dollars a meal was too expensive, and no fresh meat was to be obtained at any price, we fried our own pork as usual, and took breakfast on the counter.

Then, arranging our articles, we prepared for trade, and were soon visited by groups of diggers or others, to purchase or look on. Ascertaining the current prices, we disposed of

powder at $16 per pound; percussion caps $2 per hundred, or for water-proof, $8 per quarter box; small belt pistols, $32 to $48 per brace; a rifle at $100; clasp, sheath, and bowie-knives, $8, $10, and $16; and cigars at 75c. to $1.25 per dozen. Miners were always willing to pay these prices for articles which they wanted; but otherwise they would not take them at any price, owing to the difficulty of carrying weight over the mountains and *cañons*. On some days, therefore, we made good progress in this business, and on others accomplishing nothing. There were a few of the friendly Indians in the valley, but they refused to traffic with us for reasons before quoted; and our articles adapted only to their use were consequently valueless.

The abundance of the gold dust and lumps in the possession of the miners was most wonderful. A fellow clad in greasy deer skin pants and hunting shirt, the *usual dress* of the *diggers*, would purchase some article for *an ounce* or *half ounce*, and producing from the folds of a sash or handkerchief around him, an old deer-skin pouch, untie the coarse string, and turn out the dust into our scales. In this clumsy process more or less gold was spilled on the paper under the scales, and unless it was a considerable quantity they generally refused to receive it back, saying, "There's plenty more where that comes from."

Among the most conspicuous characters in the valley were Old Greenwood and his sons. The former is a famous backwoodsman and trapper in the Rocky Mountains, who has pioneered many a party of emigrants to the head waters flowing to the Pacific. On one of these expeditions his eyesight was considerably impaired in crossing the desert, and his wife, who was of the brave tribe of Crow Indians, prevailed upon him to accompany her to St. Louis for surgical

aid, paddling the canoe herself down the Yellow Stone and Missouri Rivers, several thousand miles to that city. After recovering his sight, she prevailed upon him to settle on a farm in Missouri, where they remained until two of his sons eloped, each with a Western girl, when the whole family finally penetrated to California, except one of the sons' wives, who died on the way. The mother had died before these events occurred. We saw five of his sons, three of whom were dark-skinned, black-eyed boys, one a small, active little fellow, named Governor Boggs, especially attracted our notice. The others were John Greenwood and David Crockett, or rather "Crockett," the soubriquet by which he was always called. The former is of a deep brunette complexion, with a tall, robust frame, regular and stern features, clear dark eyes, and a luxuriant head of hair, black as a crow: the latter displays a lithe and muscular frame, with blue eyes and Saxon complexion; and both are admirable specimens of the daring and reckless mountain men.

Hearing the sounds of the violin from the old man's cabin, which was near our tent, we went to the door and looked in. This was an enclosure of upright logs or slabs, about ten feet by fifteen, and roofed by the same. In one corner of the ground-floor, seated on a saddle, was John Greenwood, fiddling away in first-rate style for two or three of his friends; opposite stood a rude cot, which they had made for the old man, while the other corners contained the ever-present rifle, and two or three rough shelves, filled with bottles of liquor, and sundry drinking cups of every shape and variety; for Old Greenwood did not often indulge in Adam's ale.

The day after our arrival in the valley, a war party of ten or twelve men, including the two Greenwoods, went out, well mounted, to attack a neighboring *rancheria* of Indians, and

revenge the murder of two Oregon men by some of the latter. As they galloped away from Old Greenwood's cabin, which was the general rendezvous on such occasions, he shouted, "Be sure, boys, you bring me a squaw!" and one of our party jocosely added, "Bring *me* a scalp!" The following morning we heard the old man storming around his cabin, bare-headed, as he always was, cursing and swearing like a madman. Inquiring the cause, he replied, "They say the Injuns have killed my son, but it's a lie, a d——d infernal lie, they can't kill John Greenwood, he's a brave boy, they can't kill him, I say. I've lived among Injuns all my life, I know the varmints, and they know me—shot over a hundred of 'em in my time—shot ten in this valley, and aint done with the bloody villains yet." And the old man was right this time at least; for soon after the whole party rode in, young Greenwood, as he passed our tent, unloosing from his saddle-bow an Indian scalp, the long, black, bristly hair clotted with blood, and tied with a leather string, by which he flung it to us. Disgusted with the spectacle, we quickly threw it in the race, and turning to inquire as to the result of the expedition, ascertained that they had killed four, made several prisoners, burnt the *rancheria*, and carried off some gold dust.

The following morning, while one of our number cooked breakfast, we went in different directions through the valley and up the mountains, in search of our poney, Miss Jenny Lind, which had been lost or stolen for thirty-six hours or more. The ascent was toilsome, but the morning was delightful, and from the summit we beheld the beautiful valleys and mountains in every direction, affording a varied and extensive prospect. We each returned to camp quite unsuccessful, and at once entered into treaty with young Governor Boggs,

who said he could find Jenny for half an ounce; but requiring payment in advance, we declined the bargain, and recovered her the following day, by the aid of an Indian *vaquero*.

Sunday happened to pass off quietly, as but few miners came into the valley, and the traders' stores, open part of the day, were not frequented. Observing our American customs, we discontinued our employments, and learning that a Methodist meeting would be held in an unfinished house, we attended it, and were surprised to find there some twenty persons, mostly new comers, including four females. Two of these were young, dressed in gay western style, with some pretensions to beauty; and another, was a middle-aged person, in mourning, accompanied by a little girl. At allusions made by the worshippers to home scenes, the soft-hearted sex resorted to their favorite refreshment under such circumstances—the one with the little girl especially, crying most bitterly.

At night, the Indians in the valley, following the example of some who pretend to civilization at home, selected Sunday night for a grand carouse, and were howling with the excitement of intoxication till a late hour. The signal fires of surrounding hostile tribes had been burning some nights previous on the mountains; and they had threatened vengeance on Greenwood, whose cabin was close to our tent. We, therefore, loaded our fire-arms, and slept with them in reach of our hands. After some hours we were suddenly aroused by the yells of the Indians, and a bright light shining through our tent roof. We instantly recollected their frolic, and presumed they were making a *night* of it; but one of our party, who had boasted much of how he would fight "Ingines," seized his revolver, and creeping out of his blankets,

with much care and trepidation lifted the corner of the tent-door to discover the dread enemy. We enjoyed a hearty laugh at his expense, and quickly relapsed into the arms of Morpheus.

CHAPTER XX.

Digging Gold—Description of the Bars—Wet and Dry Diggings—Canons—Scenes among the Miners—Life in the Gold Regions—Characters—Lynch Law.

The sudden change from a life of vigorous exercise to the inactivity of the camp, and the influence of food consisting of salt provisions only, now began to be felt by all. While part remained therefore in charge of the trading, we shouldered our shovels, buckets and machine, and proceeded to the lower *bar* on the South Fork, to try our hands at digging and washing out gold. The waters were so high that not many miners were employed on the *bars* here, though there were more on the Middle and North Forks. The great rush, at that time, was to the diggings more recently discovered on the Stanislaus and other tributaries of the San Joaquin, where there were about eight thousand miners, besides traders, etc. These discoveries had excited much attention on account of the large lumps of gold found there, but the most experienced miners were already returning to the branches of the Sacramento.

Arriving on the *bar*, the scene presented to us was new indeed, and not more extraordinary than impressive. Some with long-handled shovels, delved among clumps of bushes, or by the side of large rocks, never raising their eyes for an

instant; others with pick and shovel worked among stone and gravel, or with trowels searched under banks and roots of trees, where, if rewarded with small lumps of gold, the eye shone brighter for an instant, when the search was immediately and more ardently resumed. At the edge of the stream, or knee deep and waist deep in water, as cold as melted ice and snow could make it, some were washing gold with tin pans or the common cradle rocker, while the rays of the sun were pouring down on their heads, with an intensity exceeding anything we ever experienced at home, though it was but the middle of April.

The thirst for gold, and the labor of acquisition, over ruled all else, and totally absorbed every faculty. Complete silence reigned among the miners; they addressed not a word to each other, and seemed averse to all conversation. All the sympathies of our common humanity, all the finer and nobler attributes of our nature seemed lost, buried beneath the soil they were eagerly delving, or swept away with the rushing waters that revealed the shining treasure.

This "*placer*," or *bar*, is simply the higher portion of the sandy and rocky bed of the stream, which, during the seasons of high water, is covered with the rushing torrent, but was now partially or entirely exposed. This is covered with large stones and rocks, or, on the smooth sand, with clumps of stunted bushes or trees. Selecting a spot, we inquired of those nearest, whether any other "diggers" claimed a prior possession; and such not being the case, we went to work. First fixing our machine firmly at the edge of the stream, we dug, and carried down a pile of earth to be washed; and when sufficient was collected, one filled the machine with the earth and kept it in motion, while the other supplied it with water. Getting but a small quantity of gold in that spot, we

waded through a little inlet to another part of the *bar* nearer the stream, and our labors not being well rewarded here, we again shifted our position nearer the other miners. There we fixed upon the edge of a bank, where the ground had been broken by an old miner, but soon deserted. Digging through about a foot of sand and stones which we rejected, we came to a clay deposit mixed with sand; this we filled the buckets with, and carried to the machine. The upper or sandy layer contains no gold, but it is caused by its specific gravity and the action of the water to sift through this into the clay, where it is found until the blue clay or granite formation is reached, which, in these *diggings*, is generally three to four feet; but in some of the others the miners dig ten to fifteen feet. This, we were told, was the fact in some parts of the Yuba diggings, and on the forks of the San Joaquin.

It was now midday, and the heat of the sun was quite intolerable to all but salamanders; and finding in our machines about four dollars value of gold to twenty buckets full of earth, we discontinued our labors for that day.

It is to be remembered, however, that this was by no means what is considered rich earth, which can only be got at when the streams are lowest, and the *bars* fully exposed. From what we ourselves saw, and from the concurrent testimony of all the miners of the previous summer, there can be no doubt that they obtain three ounces of gold per day and upwards, during the season of low waters. While on this *bar* we carefully noticed the operations of experienced diggers and miners, and were soon convinced of the superior utility of the pan and the common wooden rocker, for washing gold in California.

The *rocker* is simply a wooden cradle, the same as a child's cradle, except that the back rocker is higher than the front

one, thus forming an inclined plain of the bottom, across which two or three wooden cleets are nailed a foot apart. Over the head of the cradle is a grating or tin plate perforated with holes; on this the earth and water is thrown, while the cradle is rocked by a long handle at the side, like a lever, and the gold lodges on the bottom between the cleets, the mud and water escaping at the foot. We saw these rockers of different sizes, some quite small and tended only by one man, who first digging and carrying the earth to the rocker alternately supplied it, and then, with one hand kept it in motion, while, with a tin pan, he poured the water in from the stream. Others required three men, and some five, to dig and carry the earth and keep them at work. At the close of each day's work, the gold is removed, and there is no interruption for this purpose during the day. These rockers are light, easily constructed or repaired, are not effected in usefulness by the unevenness of the ground or soon worn out by use, and they can also be knocked to pieces, transferred from one mine to another, and set up again.

The common tin pan is everywhere necessary and useful, and on some of the most inaccessible *bars* in the deepest *cañons* of the mountains, no other washer can be transported or used.

We had one of the best and most practical machines with us that had been invented, and though it answered as well as we anticipated, yet the majority of *diggers* preferred *the rocker*

The *bars*, like the one just described, are denominated the *wet diggings*, and are generally in the deep *cañons* of the mountains. A *cañon* is the narrow opening between two mountains, several hundred, and sometimes a thousand feet in depth; rising some of them like perpendicular cliffs on

either hand, as if torn asunder by a violent convulsion of nature. Through these pour the rushing mountain torrents of the *wet diggings* of the gold regions of California.

Some of our party visited the *dry diggings*, which are the *gulches* and *ravines* of the sides of the mountains. The gold there obtained, is chiefly by *washing* the red clay with the pan in the pools of the ravines formed by the rainy season, or in some little mountain rivulet, often several hundred yards from the spot where the earth is obtained.

The crevices of the white-veined quartz rocks also furnished gold in lumps nearly pure or mixed with the quartz; and a good deal is extracted in this way by the common butcher or sailor's sheath knife, which is best for the purpose. Not near as much gold, however, is thus obtained, as has been generally supposed. The faces, hair, brows, and eye-lashes of the miners in the *dry diggings*, become continually plastered with the red clay in which they work and wash. India-rubber aprons are some protection, but boots of that material soon cut on the rocks; and, in fact, a deer-skin suit, with fisherman's boots, furnish the best clothing a miner can possibly have.

Returning to camp, we renewed our trading, witnessing on some days most extraordinary illustrations of *life in the gold regions*. Miners were continually coming in from different *diggings*, to expend a part or all of their gold on what they term "a burst;" which is a constant revel, day and night, for three or four days, and often a week at a time. Drinking brandy at half an ounce, and champaigne at an ounce a bottle as freely as water, they wandered and roved about from groggery to store, and store to tent, wild with intoxication, brandishing bowie-knives in sport, or shooting with the rifle at any mark they fancied, with the ball often but half home

and the rammer in. Others would leap into the saddle, and yelling with excitement, gallop furiously in every direction, regardless of all obstacles, frequently being thrown and nearly killed.

Profanity of the vilest description, oaths such as we never conceived could be uttered by human lips, incessantly filled the air, till Nature herself, awed into silence, withheld her echoes. Though accustomed to the common vice of swearing in the United States, and even to hearing it from the lips of fashionable young gentlemen of respectable families, we doubt if they are aware how extensively their vocabulary, in this particular, may be increased. Learned in boyhood, like the use of tobacco, for the sake of aping a premature manhood, both these vices would be wanting in their host of followers at maturer age, if it is true, as the giant of the British classic writers has said, that "*virtue* is the best proof of *understanding*." Yet many indulge in them from *mere habit*, who are quite ready to assent to these opinions. Independent of the moral turpitude of the one, and the indecency and expensiveness of the other, we confess, as Americans, with a thrill of shame, to have forgotten sometimes the opinion and the example of our revered and immortal Washington, in relation to these vices. The deep disgust, however, experienced at the revolting profanity of life in the gold regions, we can never forget; and thousands of our young countrymen who have gone there, will, doubtless, share in this opinion.

With some of these men, who appeared good-natured in their excesses, we ventured to remonstrate. We said, "This digging gold is toilsome and hard labor, why do you not try and keep some for a rainy day?" And their reply was,

"Oh, we know where there's plenty more, and when we want it we can dig it."

As further proof of the general wastefulness of the gold, we frequently saw miners lying in the dust, helpless with intoxication, who, it was known, had hundreds of dollars in gold always upon their persons; and one man in particular, who had dug with his own hands and obtained of Indians some $23,000 in gold, we saw in this condition two or three days, and he had now but about $7,000 remaining

Old Greenwood's little boys, and others, came daily to our tent, sometimes twice or thrice, with gold dust tied up in the corners of their handkerchiefs, amounting each time to fractional parts of one, two, or three dollars, which they obtained by gathering and blowing or washing out the dust about the counters or doors of the traders and groggeries.

Among all the roving and reckless characters by whom we were surrounded, were two special curiosities, named Bill and Gus. Now, Bill and Gus had come over from the Middle Fork, for a particular, general, and universal "burst." Being well-known *diggers*, they had not only plenty of the dust, but, when that was gone, they had abundant credit, both at the traders and groggeries. As bosom friends they were never apart; and with hearts softened by the fumes of liquor they loved all around them, attaching themselves as fixtures to our tent. This was annoying; but, like many other things in California, must be borne. Bill was wiry as an Indian, and with his jet locks and furtive eyes, resembled one not a little; while Gus, with his sleek and rounded limbs, was like an elder uncle to him. One of our party, after being strongly solicited, sold Bill a bottle of French brandy, laid in for medical purposes, at half an ounce, or eight dollars. He immediately insisted on our drinking with him;

but on our refusing several times, he dashed it violently against a tree, thus throwing away his half ounce and his brandy both. In paying for something, he dropped a small lump of gold, worth two or three dollars, which we picked up and offered him. Without taking it he looked at us with a comical mixture of amazement and ill-humor, and at length, broke out with, "Well, stranger, you are a curiosity! I guess you haint been in the *diggins* long, and better keep that for a sample." Bill, finding one of our party to be a Philadelphian, at once gave him the soubriquet of "Old Philadelphia," and having learned a trade there, fondly claimed a fellow-townsman. They finally purchased a barrel of ale at three dollars per bottle, and sardines at a half ounce per box; and with a bottle under each arm, and glass in hand, went about forcing everybody to drink, finally arranging themselves under our tent-fly for a general evening entertainment.

Besides these characters, we also extended our acquaintance by the addition of several notorious individuals. One of these was a young man of respectable family who boasted of his participation in the bloody and disgraceful riots in one of our cities, a few years ago, and displaying a hideous scar, said, "I got that from an Irishman just as I was setting fire to the church." His physical development was extraordinary, and his youth and pleasant disposition make such a career more to be regretted.

One evening of the previous winter, a party of these roystering mountain blades were indulging in the bottle, when one of them unperceived emptied his canteen of pure alcohol on the head of another who was a famous bully, and seizing the candle, communicated the flame at the same moment. "Man on fire! man on fire! put him out! put him out!"

was the universal shout; and put him out they did with a vengeance, many embracing that opportunity to pay off old scores, and at the same time most effectually curing him of his bullying propensities. Among all these men are mingled not a few who have committed offences and crimes in the United States. We also met with a man of education, intelligence and wealth acquired in the gold regions, whom it is well known deliberately shot another last winter for a most trifling offence, killing him instantly. A jury was empannelled under the forms of lynch law, to try him, but they could not agree. Another was then empannelled, and this time they acquitted him. His pale countenance, and other signs, told, nevertheless, how incessantly the gnawing worm of conscience was eating into his soul.

Under this same system of lynch law, a score of men were hung last winter in the mines for thefts and similar offences, and the relatives of the punished were sure to avenge their death sooner or later. And yet there are not wanting men of moral character and religious profession, who defend the use of this infamous system in communities possessed of regular law and government. In California, indeed, its general application has been both necessary and useful; and since the less frequent resort to the extreme punishment of death, except only for murder, it has been more justly applied.

CHAPTER XXI.

Indian Murders of Oregon Men—Another War Party—More Digging—Extremes of Heat and Cold—Diseases of the Miners—Scurvy—Separation of our Party—Sacramento Fever—Supplies of Fresh Provisions Impossible.

A FEW days before our arrival in the mines, five men from Oregon, named Robinson, Thompson, English, Johnson, and Wood, were murdered by Indians while engaged in gold digging. Having but one rifle, they imprudently left it in their tent. This the Indians, some thirty or forty in number, first secured, and then commenced their attack with bows and arrows. The Oregonians defended themselves some time, repeatedly driving the Indians with no other weapons than the stones they found on the *bar* where they were at work, but upon reaching the edge of the *bar*, they were each time obliged again to retreat. At length three of them, stuck full of arrows, were exhausted with loss of blood and overcome: while the other two attempted to escape by crossing the fork, one succeeded in reaching the other side, but both finally meeting the fate of the others. One of the warriors of the tribe who participated in these murders was afterwards taken prisoner, and furnishing the above narration, his life was spared on condition that he should guide the whites to their *rancheria*.

Accordingly on the 16th of April, a war party was made

up of about twenty young mountaineers, mostly Oregon men, and including also the young Greenwoods. Well mounted, and equipped with the enormous gingling California spurs, they rode up to Old Greenwood's for a review from the old man preparatory to starting. Each man carried besides his inseparable rifle, a long Spanish knife, usually mounted with silver and stuck in the folds of his deer-skin leggings; and many were also provided with a brace of pistols or bowie knife, worn in the red Mexican sash around the waist. Old Greenwood shouted "mind the scalps and squaws for me, and be sure to bring 'em all in, boys," and away they went, at a thundering *lope*, eager for revenge.

This day one of our party again tried the "*diggins*," using the pan, but with little success. Some obtained half an ounce, and occasionally an old miner an ounce a day.

This was discouraging for men who had left their homes and families, and the decencies of civilization, with the expectation of acquiring an adequate competency by the efforts of a single year. Crossing a continent, or sailing around it on two oceans, and penetrating to the California mountains, were not considered formidable undertakings by Americans for this purpose.

But day after day we saw parties filing down the mountains and ending their voyages and journeys of six, ten, or seventeen thousand miles, filled with disgust and disappointment at the climate, the country, and inaccessible nature of the gold regions, to which thousands had been assured their vessels could sail, furnishing them with a home on board while they were engaged in gold digging on the shady banks of the beautiful rivers. Many of these avowed their determination to quit the country without delay, and we met one party of hardy boatmen from New York, many of whom, including their

captain, avowed their intention to return home before their oxen were untackled.

Our own experience, which had now extended to a week's effort and observation, more and more confirmed us in the opinion, that the prospective or actual rewards of gold digging in California, were too often totally and miserably inadequate to induce us to submit, not only to the discomforts of a life greater than those of our horses and dogs at home, but to association with vice in its worst forms, combined with a certainty of impaired health, and a corresponding risk to life itself.

Some of these we have alluded to; but we found the extremes of heat and cold following each other in constant succession, especially severe. From nine o'clock in the morning till five in the afternoon, the heat is intolerable, and this may account for the name given to the country, the word *California* being derived from two Spanish words, *caliente fornalla*, or *horno*, which mean *hot furnace* in plain English. The rays of the sun pour down into the valleys and *cañons* through a dry, clear atmosphere with unmitigated power, increased by reflection from the sides of the *cañons* and mountains, and surface of the streams. The thermometer stood at 90° Farenheit, at noon, in the shade of Culoma Valley, on the 16th of April; and at night we slept cold in our tent, with our clothing on, and provided with abundant blankets. In the months of June and July the thermometer marks 109 to 112 in the shade, and the extremes of heat by day, and cold by night, are still greater in the *cañons* than in the valleys. This we have explained in regard to heat; and in regard to cold it arises from the fact that the waters of the different forks rise during the nights often one or two feet with the snows of the Sierra Nevada, melted by the heat of the previous day, on the moun-

tain: and from the opposite cause the streams fall more or less during the day.

When the great supply from this source ceases in the summer months, the streams subside with astonishing rapidity; the waters become warm and often bitter, being highly impregnated with every kind of mineral, including gold, silver, platina, quicksilver and lead. Great quantities of fish frequently die near their sources, and all combined produce water of the most unwholesome and dangerous qualities for the human stomach, and which the old residents and miners have borne the use of only by *boiling* it before drinking. There are springs in the valleys, but in the *cañons*, where *most of the gold is obtained*, only the waters of these streams can be drank.

This produces the disease known as the *Sacramento fever*, resembling the congestive fever of the west, but more fatal. It is sometimes a slow, continual fever, which men go about with for months; but in its more violent forms it is soon mortal, always affecting the brain, and in case of recovery leaving the mind impaired. The lung fever and rheumatism are brought on by working in the cold water, and stooping continually under the burning sun. Scurvy prevails to a great extent, caused by an exclusive diet of salt pork.

Though wild cattle are numerous in the valley of the Sacramento, and game abundant in the mountains, laborers cannot be had to obtain the one, nor hunters the other, to any adequate extent. *Wild cattle* must be slaughtered where they are *lassoed*, for they cannot be driven from the valley to the mountains; but even if this difficulty could be overcome, and the beef transported thither, the miners themselves will not carry it into the *cañons*, because that would involve the ne-

cessity of *frequent* cessation of labor to go and return across the mountains.

No person who has seen or traversed these mountains and *cañons* of the gold region of California, will wonder at the fact, that the miners do not emerge from or cross them oftener than they can help.

The best pack horses can only carry over from 150 to 200 lbs. at a time, and frequently fall down and die, after a few trips, if they happen to be the least overladen. There is no grass in the mountains fit to sustain them, and the only way to accomplish this would be to transport sufficient wheat, corn or oats for the purpose. Then if the trading posts in the mountains were supplied with fresh beef daily slaughtered, and carried twenty, thirty, or forty miles from the valley, the pack horses might be sent over into the various deep *cañons* with it for sale to the miners.

But in the existing state of things in California, or any which is likely to arise so long as the gold is abundant, any one may see at a glance that such a system of supplies cannot be established; or that if it were otherwise, the enormous prices of food necessary to uphold it, would not be submitted to by the miners. We saw old miners continually departing for the *cañons* of the *Middle* and *North Forks*, with one month's supply of provisions, consisting of 75 lbs. of pork and 75 lbs. of pilot bread, which were slung in sacks on each side of the horse, and for which they paid respectively at the rate of $150 and $125 per hundred pounds. Now, although the prices of these articles were rapidly declining on the seaboard by reason of the immense importation, yet the price of fresh beef was $25 per hundred pounds in San Francisco, and must further enhance there, the supply then being quite insufficient. Fresh provisions will therefore be consumed at the

sea-port and trading towns, and not, to any great extent, in the mining region.

Sheep may be driven into the mountains, and have been in small numbers, but the only food approximating to fresh meat at all available to keep in the *cañons* after it is transported there, is jerked beef. This has been supplied in large quantities by the ports of the Pacific and from Buenos Ayres, but Americans will not use it. The humbug of preserved meats was already exploded, great quantities having spoiled.

As a farther illustration of this state of things, we knew a party of Oregon men, who, during the winter, abandoned two hundred pounds of flour in the mines rather than cross the mountain with it; and in the spring, getting short of provisions in the *cañon*, they offered other diggers eight dollars per pound for pork; which being refused, they left the diggings nearly a month sooner than they intended. Finally, we saw among the miners who had been *long in the diggings* very few who had not been attacked with some of the diseases before mentioned; and they were continually going about with faces or limbs tied up with scurvy or rheumatism, or walking shadows of the fever. Robust men who had tried the diggings a few weeks were constantly abandoning them or seeking some other part of the gold region in hopes of finding less hardship and lighter labor. These we fell in with on our return from the mountains, and across the valley of the Sacramento, in descending the river, and at San Francisco. There were French, German, and Americans, and among them a party of six sailors of the Pacific whalers, who were returning to go before the mast again, swearing sailor fashion, that they would rather go whaling at half wages than dig gold any more.

With this experience and observation, and with these facts

before our eyes, two of our party, of whom the writer was one, resolved to abandon the gold region and return to San Francisco, until the healthier season of winter. Of the two remaining, the one who had brought saleable merchandise from New York obtained quarters in the store-house of Mr. Bester, a highly respectable and popular merchant there, to whom he had a letter of introduction, and to whom we were all under obligation for many kind attentions. The other and last of our party of four, our hardy and robust *little* friend, from away down east in the State of Maine, was still so incurable a case of *yellow* fever as to resolve to stick to the *diggins* any way. He had, however, knocked about the world a good deal, from the great lakes of America to the mouths of the Ganges, and had seen some "tall digging" in his time, too, as contractor on one of the great telegraph routes of the United States.

The succeeding day we met with the owner of a team of horses, the only one on the route to Sutter's Fort, and as he offered a good opportunity for two or three to accompany him, we resolved to avail ourselves of it on the following morning. We therefore employed the interim in disposing of our surplus articles, and preparing for departure. While engaged in this, we narrowly escaped a grand explosion. In closing my trunk, which was of iron, it set fire to a box of Lucifer matches imprudently left in it, and with a whiz-fiz the white smoke came pouring out of the crevices. A canister of powder was in its neighborhood; and if the trunk was left to itself, an explosion was certain to occur sooner or later So there was but one course to adopt, and I accordingly unlocked and opened it in the middle of a pretty *wide* ring of lookers-on. Fortunately, Lucifer's intentions were unsuccesssful that time, at all events; and the fire of the

enemy was drawn without burning powder. But I leave this warning to future travellers, never carry Lucifers and powder in the same trunk—if you do, be careful not to mix them.

Completing these arrangements, it came our turn after supper to *wash the dishes,* which we accomplished in this wise: a tin pail of hot water sat before us; into this we pitched pans, plates, cups, spoons, pots, and knives and forks, and a big piece of soap; stirring all around, we took each article out separately, and placed them all carefully in another pail, devoutly hoping they would be dry by morning, and gloomily and desperately vowing we would never undertake that job again. Then we turned in for the night, dreaming of a smash among the crockery, and an extensive pursuit with a broomstick.

CHAPTER XXII.

Return to Sutter's Fort—An Oregon Farmer—Incidents by the Way—Peruvians, Chilians, and Peones—Indian Prisoners and Scalps—Shooting the Prisoners—Massacre of Whitman's Family in Oregon—Scenes and Incidents—Cayuse War—Old Tom McKey.

Next morning, at daylight, placing our trunks in one of several ox wagons, which were accompanied by a large party of disgusted adventurers, we mounted into a light wagon drawn by two little Oregon ponies, and commenced our return to Sutter's Fort.

Caleb Grover, the owner and driver of the team, was an Oregon farmer—a perfect specimen of his class; hearty, generous, and brave. Originally from the great State of New York, he had emigrated to the West, and finally penetrated to the noble territory of Oregon, where, three years ago, he had secured a section of the public lands, fenced and built upon the cleared portion of it, and raised several of the finest crops of wheat in the world. Leaving his farm in competent hands, he crossed the Sierra Nevada last winter with his team, on a temporary California adventure; and having thus secured some of the dust, he intended to return home soon, preferring his broad acres in the beautiful Willamette Valley, to the agricultural resources of all California. On inquiry, we learned that he is brother to an esteemed

Member of Congress from his native State, the intelligence of whose election we communicated, much to his gratification and surprise, as the last letter which reached him from home some months previous, was more than two years old in date.

Travelling with him, beside the writer and his friend, Mr. S. L. Dewey, of New York, there was one of the many skilful and practical mechanics of the empire city, making four in all, and enabling us to travel at a pleasant rate.

As we left the beautiful Culoma Valley, we beheld the sun rising over the crest of the opposite mountains, to renew his daily course with increased intensity; and anticipated with comparative pleasure the chill norwesters of the bay and ocean. In our progress down the mountains, we saw again every species of game, and obtained specimens of the California quail by the aid of the fine double-barrel of our friend the machinist.

As we entered the narrow and deep gorge near Weber's Creek, we met a large party of Peruvians and Chilians, with their Indian *peones* or slaves, besides a considerable number of Mexicans from Sonora. All were mounted, and driving before them a number of pack-horses, laden with the most comical admixture of *fixings*, guitars, and shovels, boots, blunderbusses, and picks, not forgetting the indispensable pans which were of the ancient kind, known as calabashes, and fashioned by the cunning hand of Nature herself.

The Peruvians and Chilians dressed much in the Mexican costume, had intelligent countenances, and uniformly saluted us with politeness; but the Sonorans were sulky, appearing like a vicious and ignorant race of people, their effeminate forms hidden under the everlasting *serapé*, dirty faces muffled in handkerchiefs, and the wide *sombrero* slouched over their scowling brows. Insatiable gamblers, they are ever ready to play *monté*, in bed,

on horseback, on their dinner plate, or father's corpse; and when slain in heaps during the Mexican war, would no doubt often bet who would have the death-rattle the longest. In the practice of this vice, they maintain a nonchalance which gives them a great advantage over Americans or Europeans; winning or losing, it is all one to them, so long as they can play without ceasing. We remember seeing an American win at a monté table in San Francisco, about one thousand dollars in the space of ten minutes, and although he was used to good luck, having broken a bank at Monterey, he was highly excited, saying, "talk of *placeres*, why, what better *placer* need a man want, than you have got here in San Francisco." And truly a noble and proud boast would it be for our countrymen, not only that they are excelled by other nations in the practice of this ruinous vice, but that American citizens abandon to the *cunning* of inferior races, amusements unworthy the intellect of freemen. Gambling adds nothing to the productive industry of a nation or the world, but is simply and plainly, a contract or agreement by those who indulge in it to rob each other, leaving it to be accomplished by the chances of dice or cards, instead of pistols or daggers. Yet many persons of respectability indulge in it for mere amusement, forgetting, no doubt, the influence of their example upon others who play to their own ruin.

Following closely this motely group, came on foot a body of about sixty California Indians. Warriors and boys, squaws with *papooses* tied on boards and slung at the back, all were prisoners. Clustered together like sheep driven to the slaughter, they hastened through the gorge with uncertain steps, the perspiration rolling off their faces now pale with fright. Many of them were quite naked, and the men and boys especially, looked more like ourang-outangs than human beings

In flank and rear rode the war-party, which had left the Culoma Valley two days previous. Every man's rifle lay across the pommel of his saddle, and dangling at both sides hung several reeking scalps. Among them was a dashing young mountaineer named John Ross, who had two scalps for his share, and sticking in his sash was the red-sheathed bowie knife, which I had sold him a few days previous for an ounce of gold dust. Used previously to sever the rinds of pork, or shovel in rice and frijoles, it had now been "wool gathering" or collecting wigs for old Greenwood's fancy stores.

Well done, boys," shouted Grover, "you have given it to them this time; now, what's the news?" In reply to this inquiry, we learned that the captured Indian had led them the night before, according to promise, to their *rancheria* on Weber's Creek, where some of them showing fight and others attempting escape, they were fired upon and some twenty to thirty were killed. Their chief fought until shot the third time, rising each time to his knees and discharging his arrows, Ross finally killing, cutting off his head and scalping him. Their *rancheria* was then searched and burned; the Indians delivering up the papers of the Oregon men obtained at the time of their murder, and confessing that they had afterwards burned their bodies to ashes on the mountain.

The subsequent facts were related to the writer by his highly-esteemed friend, Mr. Donald Grant, a native of bonnie Scotland, who was one of our party to the mines, and an eye witness to the scene; not having left on his return to San Francisco till the following day.

Arriving in the Culoma Valley with their prisoners, the mountaineers and miners had a grand revel and jollification to celebrate their achievement. During the day most of the prisoners were released, but a few squaws and seven warriors

were retained. The latter were questioned and examined relative to their participation in the murder of the Oregonians. Nothing being elicited to prove their guilt, it was nevertheless determined they should die; because they being bad looking and strong warriors, it was believed that they were participators in the murders. Accordingly the consumption of champagne and brandy continued till sun set. At that hour the seven Indians were brought forth, and knowing well their fate, one of them put up his hand as a signal, and all leaped along the valley in rapid flight. Quick as thought the rifles began to crack in ever direction, while old Greenwood raving around his cabin, remonstrated at the deed, tossed his arms aloft with violent denunciation; and stooping down gathered the dust in his palms, and sprinkled it on his head, swearing he was innocent of their blood. Meantime John Greenwood stood beside the old man in stoic silence, too brave to participate in the massacre, but too much of a Crow to utter his disapproval. But frantic with excitement the others thought only of revenge, and the balls whistling in every direction laid five of the warriors dead in the valley and mortally wounded another, only one escaping unscathed. The dying rays of the sun deserting the bloody scene, yet lingered on the mountain top, and the smoke of the discharge rolled in thick volume, like a pall over the corpses of the slain, while that solitary warrior turned from his distant height, to gaze after his companions, a moment in vain. But his heart quivered with vengeance, and the thin white locks of the old man in the valley, still mingled with the gray twilight, like the sack cloth and ashes of despair.

And this is what they call fighting the Indians! A few days before only, we saw a young mountaineer, wild with rage, threaten the life of an American who had ventured so suggest,

that the murders committed by these Indians were provoked by many previous murders by the whites, and that they should be avenged by the death of the *guilty* among the Indians, and not by an *indiscriminate* slaughter.

What courage is displayed by such a warfare as this, what honor is to be gained in it, and why have so many of your mountaineers shot down scores of Indians like wolves?—we enquired as we pursued our journey with Mr. Grover.

He at once referred to the massacre of the Rev. Mr. Whitman and family in Oregon, by the Cayuse Indians in the autumn of 1847. Mr. Whitman was a Protestant missionary, who, besides his religious duties, had established a fort and trading post, and employed large numbers of Indians and emigrants in agriculture. To these Cayuse Indians who are some of them good farmers, he had taught the use of many modern implements, besides mental and moral improvement; and to the newly-arrived and exhausted emigrants, his house was an asylum of rest; while to the poor and needy his fields afforded the opportunity to earn the rewards of industry. He was eminently popular among all, and one only of the very few of the missionaries who seemed to have won the esteem, or deserved the respect of the people of the Western Territories, if we may rely upon the representations of numerous persons on this subject. Mrs. Whitman was also remarkable for her kindness, and at that time was administering to the Indians for the measles which extensively prevailed among them. Many dying of the disease, they became suspicious that they were poisoned by the medicines sent by the Whitmans, and this suspicion was said to be fomented and confirmed by the Roman Catholic priests; a suggestion which probably proceeds from religious intolerance only, and if unfounded, or unsustained, is as demoniac as the act itself would

be. One day, during this state of things, the Indians suddenly rushed upon the fort at noon, while all were in the midst of their peaceful avocations, massacreing Mr. and Mrs. Whitman and all male whites, except a Mr. Canfield, who escaped, and a Frenchman, whom, with the remaining women and children they spared, carrying them off as prisoners beyond the Utilla River to the Cascade Mountains. Two of the young women they appropriated as wives, treating them in all respects the same as their own squaws, forcing them to work, and beating both them and the children. Another, who was a widow woman, only escaped the same fate by one of those stratagems for which the sex are so admirably adapted. She passed herself off by consent of the Frenchman, as his wife. At night, however, the lynx-eyed chief watching their sleeping apartment, discovered that the mother gathered only her chickens under her wings, while monsieur roosted on the floor. The next day he sternly informed them that "Cayuse no leave squaw to go and lay on the floor, he love squaw more than that, and white man love squaw better than Indian." So madame and monsieur were obliged to "bundle" in true western style, the lady's stratagem having secured her a husband, as soon as a dominie could be found in the settlements to tie the knot.

As speedily as possible after these occurrences were known in the Willamette Valley, a force of several hundred men were organized to pursue the Cayuses, who had boasted that no white man dare cross the Utilla. Meantime, the general agent of the Hudson Bay Company, a gentleman of much influence with the Indians, volunteered to go up with presents and endeavored to ransom the prisoners. In this he happily succeeded, but the principal chief especially charged them to reach Fort Walla Walla that night; and ere the day expired,

overtook them himself, urging them forward, for a part of his people, who were discontented with the terms of the ransom, were in pursuit, seeking vengeance. They effected their escape, however, to the fort, and the scene of their final arrival in Oregon city as described to us by another eye-witness, and from whom also we received some of these particulars, was interesting in the extreme. The little children, especially, danced wild with joy at the escape from the hardships and terrors which surrounded them.

The Cayuse war immediately ensued, and although these Indians are well mounted, and armed with muskets and rifles, yet they were speedily humbled and brought to terms, many of them being killed. Keeping along the heights of the Cascade Mountains, they would circle around the camp of the Oregonians in the valley, and discharge their long Queen Anne pieces over the heads of their enemy, while the moment one of them came within range of the unerring western rifle, his saddle was sure to be vacated.

Conspicuous in this little army of Oregon men, was a famous backwoodsman and mountaineer, named McKey,* or, as he is familiarly called, old Tom McKey. During the most considerable brush with the Cayuses, one of their chiefs rode up to him and boasted that his life was charmed, he could swallow hot lead or balls, and McKey's rifle could not kill him. But this was the poor red-skin's last boast on earth, for ere his lips had closed, old Tom's rifle cracked, and sent a ball crashing through his teeth and neck, breaking the delusive charm forever. We saw this old Mr. McKey in the California mountains, and his appearance was beyond all others the most striking. Of middling height, and possessed of a square, athletic, yet agile form, his countenance bronzed

* Pronounced McKi.

by prairie sun and mountain breeze, the fire of youth blazed from his eagle eye, while its steady vigilance betokened the noon of life, and only the locks of iron gray foretold its later years. Of a respectable family and good education, he nevertheless preferred the lonely solitudes of the Rocky Mountains, every nook and corner of which he knew as well as the range of his rifle; and had been for many years an agent for the Hudson Bay Company.

Fresh from this Cayuse war, and exasperated by the atrocities of the Indians, the mountaineers no sooner reached the head waters of the Sacramento Valley, than they avenged every theft of the California Indians by the rifle, which being retaliated, a system of *mutual murder* has sprung up, which men engage in who are called *brave*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Encampment—Thunder and Lightning—Arrival at the Fort—Night Scenes—Captain Sutter—Indian Sailors—Policy of the First Settlers—Log of the Hooikaika—Mosquitoes—Fleas—Shooting Seal—Mode of Taking Otter—Arrival at San Francisco—State of Affairs there—Funeral.

At evening, having overtaken the ox-teams which had passed us while nooning, and reached the forks of the road, we all concluded to encamp there for the night.

While enjoying our supper of pork and Oregon slap-jacks, a thick, black cloud spread over the whole heavens, and was soon accompanied by sharp lightning and thunder, with a little rain. Such a phenomenon is very rare in California, and years often pass without its occurrence. The rain was probably the last of the brief showers which follow after the rainy season at intervals of some weeks. We soon turned in for the night, some on the ground by our camp fire, others in the wagons, and the remainder under a tent which was then pitched for the first time, preparatory to the erection of a small house of entertainment.

During the night the *coyotes* were yelping around us in great numbers, and some of the villains having the audacity to pull at our tent ropes, one of the sleepers vowed that they put their noses under the canvas and took a snap at his hair. We concluded that he was the barber of his tribe, and mistook

our friend's unshorn locks for a tail that needed docking. Continuing our journey early the following morning, we rode twenty miles, reaching Leidesdorff's Rancho to a late breakfast. Here we met a little, short, fat Dutchman, named Smidt, well known in the country by a Spanish cognomen which escaped my memory. I allude to him as one of the few who obtained a considerable quantity of gold dust by employing the Indians to dig. He spoke Spanish fluently, besides English and German—wrote a good hand, and acquired his influence with the Indians chiefly by kindness and a knowledge of their language. He sold common glass beads all last winter, whenever he could obtain them from Kanakas, or newly-arrived emigrants, to the Indians for gold, weight for weight. A good deal of gold was sold in the mines at that period for *three and four dollars the ounce.* At the Stanislaus diggings a box of raisins sold, by retail, *weight for weight*, or about four thousand dollars in gold dust. Incredible as this may appear, it is a well known-fact, and these raisins were eaten for the cure of scurvy, prevailing without remedy.

Alluding to the impossibility of employing the Indians any more, Mr. Smidt said, that last winter one of the whites, in looking for a lost horse, called an Indian boy to go and aid him: the poor boy, not understanding him, ran away in fright, but was instantly shot dead by the rifle of his pursuer. Such lamentable instances of cowardly murder have ever marked the intercourse of whites and Indians, as soon as the former increased in numbers among the latter.

Crossing the beautiful plain that afternoon, we reached Sutter's Fort, covered with dust from head to foot, and enjoyed the novelty of fresh provisions, and a table to eat at once more. That night and the one following, we availed

ourselves of the only opportunity while in California to rest in a bed, for sleep much we could not in so luxurious a position; occupy the floor we could not, for others were ahead of us there; and we finally resolved that at home we could roll up in our blankets, and sleep in the garden or in a yard with clean bricks.

A great row was also in progress every night among the miners, and others tarrying at the fort. Drunkenness reigned supreme, and fighting followed of course. A poor Frenchman was nearly killed for saying *sacre bleu;* and bottles full of wine, and heads full of sap, were broken without discrimination, and in the greatest confusion. Hundreds of dollars were often spent this way in a single night, and thousands on Sunday, when Pandemonium was in full blast. Gambling prevailed without limit or cessation; men often losing pounds of gold dust in a night, which they were months of dreadful hardship and toil in obtaining.

While there, we had the pleasure of another interview with Captain Sutter; and asking why he declined a further *talk* with the Indians at Culoma Valley, he said that he could control the Indians, but could not control the whites; and his influence with the former would, therefore, avail nothing. As Indian agent, he receives only $750 per annum, and since the gold discoveries, has expended more than that amount at every *talk* had with the Indians. In a statistical report lately forwarded to the government, he had put down the whole number of the Indians in the valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, at 80,000, which he believed to be correct. These are divided into, probably, 150 small tribes; and he could manage the whole of them, in his own way, with a squadron of dragoons. He had requested the commanding officers to transmit his resignation as agent, unless he received

such a force speedily; for he seemed to prefer the retirement and quiet of his farm on Feather River, accompanied by his son, a young man of twenty years of age, to all the bustle and annoyance of business.

While at the Embarcadero, we saw a schooner belonging to Captain Sutter, manned entirely by Indian sailors, and which, under command of one of their own number, made continual trips to San Francisco and back. As an illustration of the policy pursued towards these Indians by the first settlers, an instance related to the writer by the late Mr. Sinclair may be quoted. While out hunting with Captain Sutter and another person, they were informed by a friendly Indian, that a hostile tribe was approaching to attack their house. Returning home immediately, they arrived befere the Indians, and prepared for defence.

The latter soon came up in considerable numbers, and, as a prelude, sent three of their chiefs to the house, ostensibly for a *talk*, but really as spies to report the nature and kind of the defences. These were received without any show of suspicion, and informed that their friendship and labor were desired, and that they would be kindly treated and remunerated in return. Assenting to this, they offered to return to their warriors and arrange the terms, but were informed that the *pale faces* never treated with arms in their hands, and that relinquishing these, two of them must remain, while. the other carried a message to the warriors to bring their weapons and deliver them to the chiefs in the house, one at a time. The chiefs being meantime held as hostages, the savages were obliged to disarm themselves; and were thus taught that the pale faces fully understood their own mode of warfare, and were superior to them in strategy and courage, as well as in the weapons peculiar to them. Such a policy as

this made the Indians peaceable and useful; but it is now abandoned, and extermination substituted in its place. Mr. Sinclair afterwards employed these Indians to labor, keeping them supplied with food by hunting, aided by two or three of their number who were most expert. On one of these occasions, while tracking a deer, accompanied by a boy, he saw what he supposed to be an antelope within close rifle range, and watching it carefully some moments, finally shot and killed it. Returning shortly after to secure his prize, what was his surprise and sorrow to find he had shot his best Indian hunter, who was thus painted and completely disguised with the head of an antelope. Such are some of the vicissitudes of life in the wilderness.

Bidding adieu to our kind friends at the fort, among whom Philadelphia and the Old Dominion were ably represented, we embarked on the 21st April, at Sacramento City, on board the schooner Louisa, of 70 tons burden. She was the best and prettiest craft on the river, and with a good fresh breeze was a very fast sailor; her timbers having been originally prepared on the Delaware River, and brought out to the Sandwich Islands, where she was completed as the yacht of Kamehameha III., and called the "Hooikaika," which is Kanaka for go-ahead, or not to be beat, or something similar. With her red streak and raking masts, she was exactly the craft for a pirate, and was provided with a snug little cabin finished with the cocoa wood of the Islands. We were soon under weigh, having engaged passage for San Francisco at $30 each, and meals at California prices. We had some thirteen passengers, besides one of the owners, (a young Philadelphian, who had been two years in California,) and a crew of seven men, including the captain. This was the return-trip of the first voyage, the vessel having carried some sixty

tons of freight, besides several passengers up the Sacramento, drawing nine feet water; but the river was then very high, and the bark "Whiton" afterwards ascended to the same point, drawing twelve feet. But for the *regular* navigation of this river, a sailing vessel should only draw six feet. Steamers drawing nine feet of water can ascend to Sacramento City at all seasons of the year. The owners had paid $7,000 for this schooner; and although they paid $150 to £200 per month to each of the crew, besides a large amount to her captain, yet her first trip had nearly paid for her. She was, however, a foreign bottom, and only admitted to carry freight on our waters under a temporary permit from the Commodore of the squadron and Collector of the port, which was liable soon to be rescinded.

The afternoon of our "first day out," was signalized by running smash into a big sycamore tree at Suttersville, through awkwardness in making a landing; and the branches came snapping and crashing down on the deck, some of them nearly as large as our masts, showing the wood to be very weak and brittle. Before we could clear the wreck and get free, we were obliged to cut away nearly half the tree, which delayed us two hours or more; and this occurred many times during the passage down, owing to the windings of the river, and its strong and rapid current at some of these points.

We slept in the berths rolled in our blankets, and next morning appeared as well as could be expected, in consideration of hosts of mice, thousands of cockroaches, and millions of musquitoes; besides which, we afterwards captured two large Sandwich Island *tarantulas*—a species of spider preferable in a museum rather than in a bed.

Reaching Merritt's Slough, we avoided it, and sailed down the main river, which here is very beautiful, perpetually wind-

ing, and fringed with trees on both shores. Here we were constantly getting on shoals, and foul of trees, being obliged to carry out our kedge and warp continually. On the fourth day after sailing, we found ourselves stuck in the mud, near the entrance of the Suisun Bay. Meantime we watched the brandy bottles, or dead marines, as the sailors call them, floating by, one by one—an evidence that something besides water was used in the lovely valley of the Sacramento. At Suisun city, or Toosoon, as some owners of lots in other cities called it, we saw one tent, and were hailed by a party of surveyors, (among whom was a clerical gentleman,) to know how many lots we would take.

Near this point we took off ten passengers, Oregonians, from the mines, who had sailed three days before us in another schooner, badly manned and managed. From these men we obtained much valuable and interesting information about the Columbia River, and the country bordering on it. In crossing the mountains, seven of them had driven off a large body of Indians who attacked them, but fled precipitately under their fear of a revolver, which they took for an evil spirit quite invincible. To relieve the tedium of our trip, we were greatly amused with an old English sailor on board. He had been an old toper, but was now reformed. He said he could not read or write, and had no wish to learn such *land tacks*. When heaving the lead, and no bottom was reported, the old fellow sung out, "Glad of it—hope there is no bottom;" and losing our flying jib-boom up a tree, he pronounced it "a d——d fine pity." In addition to this specimen of an old salt, our pilot, Antoine, was a genius of the fresh-water order. He was mate of another craft, which was on her trip down at the same time with us; and being afraid that the "Ca'line" would beat us, he kept the steam

up and the coppers hot, and the vessel in the mud or up the trees half the trip. "She'll go, she'll go;" "I'll show you the water, captain—you can do the rest;" and, "I showed you the water, didn't I?" were favorite expressions with him; and just then we were sure to be brought up all aback.

While becalmed and waiting the tide in the bay of San Pablo, we took our small boat and visited the rocks called the "Two Brothers." We found a few sea-shells, but no eggs, and were speedily glad to retreat, literally *covered* with fleas, which seemed to generate in myriads among the *guano* and feathers.

Seal in great numbers were popping their heads out of water around these rocks, and we shot at several, some of whom took their last dive, and doubtless found themselves wrong side up.

Otter also abounded formerly in these bays, and on the coast, but they have been nearly all destroyed, and are now comparatively rare. The mode of taking them, is to discover their haunts, and pursue them in swift whale boats, keeping up a discharge of small arms, by which means they are driven among the shoals and rocks or on shore and easily captured.

At the close of the fifth day after leaving Sacramento City, we got a stiff norwester, and sailing twelve knots an hour, soon made Angel and Wood Islands, the latter bearing as we approached it the exact form of an immense sperm whale: and at 9 P. M. we came to anchor in the cove of San Francisco, among some seventy or eighty vessels of all classes. We had thus occupied over five days in the trip of 165 miles, owing to the inexperience of our captain in the navigation of the river, and other similar causes. The downward trip is often made in three days or less.

SAN FRANCISCO.

We found the state of affairs in San Francisco very much as when we left. Numerous arrivals had taken place, both from abroad and from the mines. The latter consisted of those who were disappointed or disgusted, and those who were returning with their *winter's diggings*. These were chiefly Oregonians or others, on their way home, and the launches from all the mines brought down an aggregate of from $20,000 to $30,000 per day in gold dust. The twenty miners who came in the schooner Louisa had about $50,000, the net result of six month's digging; this would be an average of $2,500 each, or $5,000 for twelve months; and if generally applied would be an over estimate, because these men are the most robust in the world, and accustomed to the severest labor. The most successful among them had $7,500; but they all agreed that his luck was extraordinary, and from this it will be perceived that several of their number had less than the above average of $2,500.

The price of labor in San Francisco we found had declined a little, and the tendency was downward, as the arrivals of destitute persons from all parts of the world increased. Salaries, which are mostly regulated at a certain sum *per month*, and not per annum, had declined from $500 to $300 per month. Rents were still advancing on the monthly rates, and none of the expenses of living were decreasing. We went to the house of our former landlord, Mr. Merrill, and obtained consent of a friend to occupy the spot on the floor beside his bed, for the night's rest, and we desired nothing more comfortable.

Soon after our arrival, we were greatly grieved to hear of the demise of Mrs. Simmons, a lady of transcendent piety, amiability, and worth, who, with her husband, Captain Simmons, accompanied by her brother, had been our fellow pas-

sengers in the steamer Oregon. She was the first American lady who died in San Francisco, having fallen a victim to the Panama fever, and poetry would be too hackneyed to express her excellence. Truly might her relatives and friends rejoice that their loss was her great gain.

While reflecting in sadness upon this event, I was requested by my landlady, to attend the funeral of a little boy, two years old, as scarcely any but the few women in the place attended on such occasions. Though unshaven as I came from the mines, I went as requested. The scene was an impressive one. In a little frame house, with one room clean and tidy, sat a dozen plainly-dressed females, some five men, and the heart-stricken mother by the side of the little coffin, with her little boy, the only one left, sitting at her feet. Away in the mountains, *digging gold*, was the poor bereaved father, unconscious of his loss, and of the mournful scene in his dwelling. Rev. Mr. Hunt, of Sandwich Islands, officiated; and then Judge Burnet, of Oregon, Mr. S. W. Bent, of Boston, the writer, and a gentleman unknown to him, bore the little coffin to the grave.

Lightly and carefully we trod over the rough hills, and the wild flowers smiled along our path at the little brother so early gathered to rest beneath their nodding blossoms. Peaceful be his slumber, and happy his flight to the far off golden land.

CHAPTER XXIV.

General View of Alta-California—Climate—Soil—Agricultural Resources—Mineral Wealth—Gold—Silver—Lead—Sulphur—Coal—Quicksilver—State and Commerce prior to the Gold Discoveries—Their Influence, and the Mode in which Brought to Bear—Railroad to the Pacific—Want of an Independent Press—Oregon, and the Influence upon it of the Gold of California.

BEFORE concluding this portion of my narrative, I will endeavor to convey to the reader a general view of Alta-California, as correct as I was able carefully to obtain from an intimate acquaintance with several gentlemen long resident in the country, as well as by my own observation and brief experience. Much of the latter has already been given, and for the former sources of information, I am indebted to the late John Sinclair, Esq., George McDougall, Esq., *and others* well informed as to the whole of California.

No climate in the world can be, as a general rule, more unpleasant than that of the coast. The winter, when the southeast gales prevail, is probably the least disagreeable season, but the last winter, as is well known, was an exception to this rule. The seasons are irregular, the period proper of rain being from November to April inclusive, but in some years it falls very abundantly, in others very sparingly, while several consecutive seasons have been known to elapse with scarcely any rain. This is a serious disadvantage to

the agriculturist in any country, but especially in California, where natural irrigation is imperfect, and the soil generally inferior. Mr. Sinclair, who resided eleven years in the valley of the Sacramento, having settled there two years earlier than Capt. Sutter, considered that valley the finest portion of the country; but remarked to me that he would prefer five years of life in the United States to twenty in California. These gentlemen, by the control of Indian labor, were able to employ artificial irrigation in the raising of wheat, so as to make it comparatively remunerative; but the product bore no comparison to that of the soil of the United States, or other of our western territories. The disadvantages of any other system of labor, involving greater expenditure, must, therefore, be at once apparent. Although the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers roll a fine volume of water through the centre of these valleys, yet their lateral streams flow almost entirely through the mountains, and the natural irrigation being thus imperfect, the country is not what agriculturists consider well watered. On the other hand, the valley of the San Joaquin, as well as the lower portion of that of the Sacramento, is covered to a great extent with the *tulare* marshes, the draining of which, if practicable, would be useless on account of the annual floods. For the same reasons, the climate of much of the interior is unhealthy at certain seasons, and must so continue; but whether it is more so than in some of our western states and territories, time only can determine.

A rich soil, the natural accumulations of which have been undisturbed for ages, will display an abundant growth and *great variety of trees*. Neither of these indications present themselves to the eye of the traveller in California. Oak, sycamore, fir, and red wood, comprise the family of trees,

and of these the latter are most flourishing and abundant, chiefly, however, in the mountains. The red wood tree grows to a great size in some parts of the country, and apparently belongs to the cedar class, which, as well as the fir, is known to grow abundantly in the poorest soils.

On the shores of the Sacramento, or in crossing that valley, we saw little either of wild clover or rich natural grasses, *such as* are considered nutritious for cattle or horses. The beautiful and abundant wild flowers which we have described, seem to grow rather in mockery of the soil, than as evidence of its depth and strength. We also noticed the remarkable absence of the smaller kinds of birds and songsters of the grove, which uniformly *abound* in a country rich in *natural vegetation*. Except grapes, which grow and have been cultivated in the southern region of the country, California seems devoid of fruits. They may, doubtless, be cultivated to some extent, as well as many other products of the earth; but we allude now only to natural resources and capacity.

We know that both soil and climate are considered more genial in those portions of the country known as the Nappa Valley, and the lower Pueblo, or the Pueblo de los Angelos; and that some portions of the Santa Clara Valley have yielded extraordinary returns in wheat; but these have been the great sheep pasturages since the first discovery, and do not afford fair data by which to judge of the general agricultural resources of the country. Those portions bordering on the coast enjoy the benefit of the continual fogs, and are, therefore, best adapted to cultivation; but this is a very inconsiderable part of the whole.

The Sonoma Valley, lying north of San Pablo Bay, is also said to posses fine agricultural resources. It is watered by a little stream navigable for small craft some ten miles

from the bay, and within four or five miles of the beautiful little town of Sonoma, nestled at the base of the coast range on the edge of a fertile plain, and famous as the residence of the distinguished and wealthy Californian General, Vallejo, long identified with the fame of the country, and as the possessor of immense herds of horses and cattle.

The period of our visit was at the close of the rainy season, when the country appears to the best advantage; but the intense heat of the summer sun and perpetual drought of that season, covers the whole surface of the interior with crisp and burnt vegetation.

The coast range of hills being subject to the influence of the mists and fogs, is not so liable to this change, and affords the best grazing for cattle and horses which abound in the country in a wild state. Since the decline of the missions, however, these have rapidly decreased; but are represented as being again on the increase since the overthrow of the Mexican government.

California is, therefore, adapted by nature rather for a grazing than an agricultural country, yet there is no doubt that its capabilities in the latter respect will hereafter be fully and fairly developed, from necessity, however, and not from choice.

The mineral wealth of the country is now ascertained beyond dispute, to be greater than that of any known part of the world. The discoveries of gold, so far as they have progressed, reveal supplies of the precious metal, inexhaustible for many years, and it is believed they are only inceptive. Whether it exists in larger and deeper deposits, or in any other form than is already manifest, is extremely doubtful; but when the *placeres* shall have been exhausted by the common processes, so that labor and capital may be employed to

advantage, the out-turn of gold by the use of *quicksilver* and other scientific appliances, will be very remunerative.

Besides the common modes now resorted to for washing gold, the Chilians adopt a plan used in their own country with great success. Building an inclined plain of flat, rough stone near the stream, they scatter the earth to be washed over its surface, and then allow the water to pour gradually over it. Thus the soil and gravel is separated and carried off, leaving the gold deposited on the rough plain.

The most reliable estimate, and the highest one which we heard from those who have been long in the country, of the whole quantity of gold obtained up to April last, is eight millions of dollars in value. Large quantities are concealed and hoarded by the *rancheros* and others throughout the country, and it is therefore impossible to obtain an accurate estimate. Aside, however, from the value of this the most precious of the metals, the wonderful mineral wealth of California in other metals remains yet to be developed.

Mines of native silver are known to exist in the mountains of the gold region.

Lead in immense quantities and native purity is found in the mountains in the neighborhood of the mission of San Luis de Obispo. Sulphur abounds in large deposites back of Sonoma on the San Pablo Bay, and coal has been found in limited quantities on the northern coast. Its existence has also been reported near the straits of Karquinez; with what truth I am unable to say, though disposed to doubt it.

But the most important, if not the most valuable, of the mineral products of this wonderful country, is its quicksilver. The localities of several mines of this metal are already known, but the richest yet discovered is the one called Forbes's mines, about sixty miles from San Francisco, near San José.

Originally discovered and *denounced* according to the Mexican laws then in force, it fell under the commercial management of Forbes of Tepic, who also has some interest in it. The original owner of the property on which it is situated, endeavored to set aside the validity of the *denouncement*, but whether on tenable grounds or otherwise, I know not. At this mine by the employment of a small number of laborers and two common iron kettles for smelting, they have already sold quicksilver to the amount of $200,000 and have now some two hundred tons of ore awaiting the smelting process. The cinnabar is said to yield from sixty to eighty per cent. of pure metal, and there is no doubt that its average product reaches fifty per cent. The effect of these immensely rich deposites of quicksilver upon the wealth and commerce of the world, can scarcely be too highly estimated, provided they are kept from the clutches of the great monopolists. Not only will its present usefulness in the arts, be indefinitely extended and increased by new discoveries of science, but the extensive mines of gold and silver in Mexico, Chili and Peru, hitherto unproductive, will now be made available by its application.

The wonderful influence of all this mineral wealth upon California itself, is most apparent, when comparing its present prosperous condition with the state and commerce of the country prior to the gold discoveries. The supplies of sea furs had dwindled into insignificance. The quantity of hides and tallow was steadily decreasing, and the difficulty and delay in obtaining such cargoes on the coast in late years are well known. The trading post of the Russian Fur Company on the Sacramento was discontinued, and the trade and commerce of San Francisco and other ports were in a state of collapse Emigration from the United States, though

somewhat attracted thither by the glowing accounts of the country and by arousing the jealousy of our people towards England, was yet insignificant, compared, with the tide rolling towards Oregon; and many, after looking into the country had already abandoned it for the latter fine territory. Our whaling fleets in the Pacific would not frequent the bay of San Francisco, though "capable of receiving the navies of the world," when supplies of far greater abundance and variety were cheaply and easily obtained at the Sandwich Islands.

The supposed transcendent advantages and importance of the bay of San Francisco, together with the magnificent project of a railroad to the Pacific, first conceived and urged upon the attention of the nation by Asa Whitney, Esq., of New York, fixed the attention of the government and the hearts of the people, upon the acquisition of the whole of Alta-California. The treaties with Mexico and New Grenada, the establishment of the Pacific Mail Steamers, and the organization of the Panama Railroad Company, soon followed. Meanwhile it was confidently predicted that San Francisco would become the lap of the commerce of the East, and that the teas and silks of China entering her portals would flow along the great artery of the continent projected by Mr. Whitney. But the advocates of the extension of the Pacific Railroad to San Francisco, are little aware of the difficulty, if not the *impossibility*, of cutting such a road through the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Higher as well as more rugged and inaccessible in their nature than the Rocky Mountains, the pass through the Sierra Nevada, though traversed by wagons in the summer, is difficult at all times; and especially dangerous during the long winters, when filled with immense masses

of snow and ice, it is often impassable even by pack mules. To the truth of this observation, the bleaching bones of many lost emigrants too mournfully testify. Hence I do not hesitate to assert, that some other point must be sought for as the terminus of such a road, and that more to the north; and I think it not presumptuous to express the opinion, that Puget's Sound,—the route to which avoids the great sandy deserts of the South—is the only proper and advantageous outlet for this great work.

My views in this respect have been formed from much conversation with Oregonians, who described Puget's Sound as an incomparable harbor, surrounded by a fine country, and accessible by an easy pass through the Rocky Mountains: and these views I have reason to believe, were long ago entertained by the original projector of the road. Eminently practical and feasible as the construction of this road on the proposed plan is by many believed to be, yet most will admit, that a quarter of a century would be consumed in its completion.

Such being the case, it becomes apparent that if the trade of China is ever diverted, to any great extent from its present channels,—which some even doubt—it must be by the employment of steamers, from the port of Shanghae to the Sandwich Islands and thence to Panama. Should this be accomplished, time only can determine whether or not a railroad from San Francisco to New York will be able to compete, either in *celerity or economy*, with the Panama railroad and steamers to that port and New Orleans. *When* teeming millions occupy the great western territories west of the Mississippi, *both* of these routes to the Eastern world will be essential to the requirements of the Great Republic of that day.

Such was the actual condition of California, when sustained only by its natural resources for commerce and agriculture ; and such its prospective advantages prior to the gold discoveries. If the above reasoning be correct, it is plain that these discoveries alone saved that country from the prostration into which it had already fallen ; and this is not only admitted by old residents there, but further vouched for by the dozen old *adobe* houses constituting the town of San Francisco in 1846.

The wonders of the gold region were accordingly trumpetted to the world, with unabating, but by no means unforeseeing zeal. The rich *placeres* were visited by government officers, land and town proprietors, and by the remainder of the population generally. Many commenced gold digging, while others returned to purchase real estate, perfect their titles, make town maps, and above all to send glowing accounts to the United States of the result of all the most successful efforts in the mines. To these were *added* a delicious climate and wonderful agricultural fertility.

The inaccessibility of the *placeres*, the diseases, the hardships, and the very moderate remuneration resulting to the great mass of the miners, were quite forgotten or omitted, (in the communications and reports of a few only excepted) while all the crimes or outrages were attributed to Stevenson's regiment, whose name was *legion*. All this may perhaps be accounted for by the gold excitement, than which none other is better calculated to unhinge the mind, or blunt the moral sense, but be that as it may, the results are partially before us, and will yet be more fully developed. Four hundred vessels and cargoes were yet to arrive from the United States, the aggregate cost value of which could not be less than ten millions of dollars, when the market was already glutted with

nearly every kind of merchandise; and some have since gone to look after their property who never dreamed of visiting California in person, while the quantity of gold yet received is a mere mite compared with the property gone there. The cotton and linen goods, and summer clothing, shipped in accordance with the false ideas of the climate, and the large ships which were to ascend the streams of the gold region, and serve as a home for the miners while in the *diggings*, might well close our review of this state of things. But unfortunately we left behind us in San Francisco too many, who, while awaiting the arrival of some of these vessels and cargoes and disappointed and sick at heart, did not fail to convince us that the end is not yet.

An *independent press* is needed in California more than anything else; and without disparagement to the newspaper now established there, others might find a legitimate field of usefulness and advantage. This view of things in California, we are well aware, differs much from some of the correspondence from that country; but so great is the excitement there, that it is next to impossible for new comers merely by their own observation to obtain a correct knowledge of the aspect of affairs.

The effect of the gold of California upon the prosperity of Oregon, already beneficial, seems likely to continue so in a more eminent degree. Large numbers of her *hardy* and industrious settlers spent the last *winter* in the mines of California, generally with success commensurate with their perseverance, prudence, and sobriety. We met and conversed with many of these while in the country, and their general estimate was, that fifteen hundred Oregonians had returned, or were on their way home, with an average of fifteen hun-

dred dollars each, in gold dust, which would make up an aggregate of two and a quarter million of dollars; and we do not think two million would be an over estimate. All these Oregonians return to resume their residence in the Willamette Valley, though some of them will again visit the mines of California next winter.

They alluded to Oregon in the most glowing terms, as an agricultural country watered by many beautiful streams, which rise in the Cascade Mountains and empty into the Columbia. The climate, as represented by them, is also far superior to that of California, the rainy season being more regular and abundant, and the dry season not so continued or intense. The effects of the climate upon the constitution are of the most beneficial character, if we may judge by the contrast between these robust men, and the native resident Californians, of the laboring classes, who are generally of diminutive and puny appearance.

Before closing our general review of Alta California, we will remark that so large an emigration of the American people as have gone to that territory, must make something of the country. They will make it one of the States of this Union, at all events, and speedily, too; and although the country is only adapted by nature for mining and grazing, yet a constant trade must result from the former, and more or less agriculture be added to the latter, from the necessity of the case. A few have made, and will hereafter make fortunes there, and very many of those who remain long enough will accumulate something; but the great mass, all of whom expected to acquire large amounts of gold in a short time, must be comparatively disappointed. I visited California to dig gold, but chose to abandon that purpose rather than ex-

pose life and health in the mines, and as numbers were already seeking employment in San Francisco without success, and I had neither the means nor the inclination to speculate, I resolved to return to my family and resume my business at home

CHAPTER XXV.

Recent Events of Interest in California—Increase of San Francisco and general Population—Ocean and Inland Steam Navigation—Establishment of State Government—Improvements—Speculations—Wonderful Commerce—Reflections upon its Basis and Partial Results.

THE events of interest relating to California, promised to the reader in the preface to the present edition, may, I think, properly form the subject of the two or three succeeding chapters.

I shall aim to condense from the mass of information in my possession, as clear an account as possible, of all that relates to that wonderful country, civil and political, mineral, commercial and agricultural, down to the present time.

In the accomplishment of this, I trust the reader will overlook the necessary departure from systematic narrative, attendant upon a collection of numerous facts and incidents from a variety of private correspondence, as well as from information received in personal interviews with returned Californians.

Notwithstanding the returning emigration, resulting from causes which I attempted to foreshadow in the first edition of this work, the rush of adventurers to the El Dorado still continues, and the tide of industry, enterprise, and hope, is rolling with an overwhelming flood toward the Pacific shore

of the Republic. San Francisco, the town of three or four hundred houses, and three or four thousand inhabitants a few months ago, is now the city of four thousand houses, and forty thousand inhabitants, having *doubled its population*, or nearly so, once in *every three months*.

About *two hundred thousand tons of shipping* are already anchored in its waters, and the sails of every nation under the heavens whiten the seas in their eager flight to its golden gate; while tens of thousands of our indomitable and restless countrymen, have made their way over prairie, mountain, and desert, in search of the goal of their existence—the *placeres* of California.

Near *one thousand vessels* have sailed from American ports alone, carrying with them some sixty or seventy thousand emigrants, which, with those overland, will swell the number to one hundred thousand from our own country, forming, with emigrants from other portions of the world, a grand total of 150,000 inhabitants for California, on the 1st of May, 1850.

Beside San Francisco, which must ever remain the chief city and commercial metropolis, several important towns have sprung up as if by magic, some of them numbering their ten, twenty, and thirty thousand inhabitants. Steamers are plying regularly upon the navigable waters of the interior; and the voyage up the Sacramento River, which a few months since occupied from five to eight days, is now accomplished on board a floating palace of 700 tons in nine hours. Thus the highest efforts of civilization have already been put forth, in a land which is yet a wilderness in comparison with the Atlantic States of this Union.

Coeval with this wonderful train of events, and in accordance with the universal expectation of their countrymen, this

energetic and enlightened people have arisen in their strength and intelligence, and formed a State Government, endowed with a Constitution and Bill of Rights excelled by none in the exhibition and maintenance of those glorious principles, flowing from the great and perpetual fountains of human liberty—the American Declaration and Federal Constitution.

The preliminary to this event was the proclamation of Brigadier-General Riley, the civil and military Governor of the Territory, calling on the people to assemble in convention at Monterey, early in the ensuing month of September. This proclamation was issued in June, and the election of delegates having been held in August following, the convention assembled in due form at the time and place designated.

The 13th of October, 1849, witnessed the completion of their important labors and the signing of the Constitution, and on the 13th of November the first election was held in accordance with its provisions. On that day, amidst the torrents of the rainy season, the Constitution was adopted by the people, the whole number of votes polled being but about 15,000; which is accounted for by the inclemency of the season, and by the brief time allowed for the dissemination of that instrument. Peter H. Burnett, (late judge in Oregon and California,) was elected Governor, John McDougall, (late of Indiana,) Lieut.-Governor, G. W. Wright, and Edward Gilbert, representatives in Congress; and on the assembling of the Legislature at San José, which had been declared the capital of the State, Wm. M. Gwinn, (late of Mississippi,) and John C. Fremont, (late of South Carolina,) were duly elected United States senators.

Thus has the Golden State presented herself at the doors

of the American Union—a refulgent star, whose admission into the bright galaxy must, in due time, be accomplished upon the conciliatory terms of the original Federal Compact, and upon *no other;* else may the ominous 13th of November, which saw the adoption of her Constitution, presage a *fall of meteors* more awful in the political world than once strange in the natural.

To the American people accustomed to intelligent and energetic action as the inevitable result of their institutions of freedom, this speedy and vigorous formation of a new and independent State, presents no extraordinary spectacle; but to the governments and people of the Old World, it stands forth a *final* demonstration of the self-evident truth that man was created for self-government.

Having disposed as briefly as possible of that portion of my subject under the designation of civil and political, I will now endeavor to record such information of general interest in regard to California, as may be more acceptable to the majority of readers.

San Francisco can already boast of ten ocean steamers navigating the Pacific, and as many, or more, upon her inland waters. Of the former, the first arrived from Panama about the 28th February, 1849; and of the latter, the McKim and Senator made their first trips up the Sacramento on the 26th October and 6th of November following. So great an interest has now been invested upon the Pacific, and in California, by the people of the *mother country*, (for thus we may legitimately term the American States,) that this already important steam marine must, and will, be largely increased. To accommodate these, and vessels of every class, a wharf has already been constructed, extending several hundred feet into the cove of San Francisco, which has enabled vessels

to discharge cargo at favorable tides without the aid of lighters, and which will be accessible at all tides when completed to its full extent of 2,000 feet. This great enterprise will cost several hundred thousand dollars, and has thus far been prosecuted with the aid of San Francisco capital. It is, however, quite evident that in the course of time, when the site of the city shall be graded, and in some degree levelled, the whole of the now-extensive flat in front of the anchorage will be filled in, and covered with streets and warehouses.

The supply of the city with fresh water, will also require the construction of large reservoirs to receive a portion of the floods of the rainy season, or, as the latter may fail, some other project involving heavy expense must be submitted to. At the present time, especially in the dry season, water, in limited quantities, has been brought from Saucelito, or other distant locality, and is sold at $3 per barrel. This, it may be said, arises from the value of labor ; but the fact that the well water of the town is brackish and unwholesome, is the the better reason. Until the difficulty is obviated, the scarcity of water must prove a serious evil, not only as an element of health, comfort and convenience, but in averting the calamity of fire.

Such a calamity has at length visited San Francisco, and it has been a matter of surprise that it was not an earlier occurrence in a town composed only of tents and wooden houses, sealed and partitioned with calico and cotton cloth. This event transpired on the morning of the 24th of December, 1849, and consumed that portion of the city on and near the plaza, involving a loss at California prices of over a million of dollars. Had it occurred during the dry season, and prevalence of the furious daily gales, the whole city must

have been laid in ashes; and that this will yet be its fate, there is too much reason to apprehend. Nothing but the most superhuman efforts were instrumental in saving it on the occasion alluded to. That such efforts will again be brought into requisition when needed, we have abundant proof likewise, from the fact that the burnt district was entirely rebuilt in from ten to twenty days!

The vast amount of shipping at anchor in the cove and bay, is liable at all times both to the calamity of fire and wreck, not only by reason of its crowded and exposed condition, but from the entire desertion of some, and the feeble protection of most of it. In June last, the bark "Philadelphia" was burned at her anchors; and had she lain to windward, or in the midst of the fleet, many vessels must have been destroyed.

Notwithstanding these serious evils existing and anticipated, the capital and commerce of the world is pressing in an increased ratio to this great mart of the Pacific.

As results of this wonderful movement of the capital, labor, and enterprise of the whole world towards one point, I quote the following well-authenticated facts:

Rents of rooms and houses are from $200 to $5000 per month; and of lots whereon to erect tenements, $100 to $1000 per month, always payable in advance. The popula- is about 40,000, of which the *majority* live in *tents*. The whole plaza is surrounded with gambling-houses, of which there are near one hundred in the town. Hundreds of thousands of dollars' value in merchandise is exposed in the streets and on the beach, much of which will be utterly destroyed during the rainy season.

A large portion of that fleet at anchor in the cove and bay, of which any port in the world might be proud, is rotting

irrevocably, or is liable to be rendered unseaworthy. Chinese junks and Malay proas, lie in strange juxtaposition with Baltimore clippers, and New York, Philadelphia, and Boston packet ships.

Carpenters and builders receive from $10 to $16 per day, while thousands gladly labor for board and lodging, which, at $16 to $50 per week, are high wages also. Money is abundant, and said to be easily obtained by all; yet strange paradox in that land of paradoxes, it commands 6 per cent. per month by annual investment on "bond and mortgage," and 10 per cent. per month on transient loans on security.

Political economists may well be astounded to behold a continual and usual augmentation of money attended by a constant increase in the rates of interest. The *more abundant* the money the *higher* its price, is certainly a new phase in that science. As a help-meet to this state of things, gold coin has been issued in private mints, which the United States Mint officers have ascertained to be very considerably below its professed standard. Flour has fluctuated from $5 to $45 per barrel, and all the necessaries of life in a like proportion. Stealing, and similar crimes, are absolutely unknown; yet thousands of dollars' worth of property changed hands during the fire, as if by magic, merely to prove its ready convertibility into currency. Yet these evils, and many similar ones, are, of course, inseparable from an over-emigration to a country depending upon other lands for the food, clothing, and shelter of its inhabitants. Vast quantities of merchandise continue to be sent from all parts of the world, and from being selected injudiciously, the losses to the owners continue in an increased ratio. A more obvious reason, however, consists in the immense surplus of *everything* under the sun already accumulated there.

Time, and the law of supply and demand, which usually restore the balance of trade, have but transient influence in California; so that the mere chance character of this fluctuating commerce, attended by its enormous expenditure, enables traders and speculators to realize sudden fortunes, notwithstanding the irreclaimable losses of the great majority of consignors. But as this is a commerce in which the whole world is employed, new adventurers and speculators will successively engage in it for a long period of time. The 1,000 vessels with their cargoes, and the 100,000 emigrants from the United States, will have transferred to California in money, or its equivalent, *one hundred million of dollars*, at a fair and moderate estimate; and if we add for all the rest of the world twenty million of dollars, there appears the grand total investment in El Dorado of $120,000,000.

To pay for this, we must look only to her mineral products; for upon these *alone*, be it remembered, has this gigantic movement been based. History can only determine this question in the future; for as yet, inexhaustible as the gold region is admitted to be, the out-turn of the labor of fifty thousand miners has only produced a return equal to a small per centage on the total investment of capital in this stupendous enterprise. And future history also will decide whether a country possessing but one great industry, can experience a prosperity as real and lasting, as in all previous history has been established only upon agriculture and commerce, mechanics, manufactures, and mines.

If the foregoing estimate of imports of all kinds—including the cost of vessels as well as cargoes—seems extravagant, I will remind the reader that the duties *collected* on foreign merchandise were upwards of $100,000 in July, and nearly double that sum in August last, with a vast monthly increase

since. But the amount of domestic imports paying no duties is incomparably larger.

This imperfect general view of the commerce of California to the present time, may be closed with the record of the fact that many vessels are already engaged in the Pacific and coasting trade, to ports in Mexico, Chili, Peru, Oregon, and Sandwich Islands. To the two latter countries, the trade in lumber and provisions has been highly remunerative; and the capitalists who hereafter establish a regular steam communication with them, cannot fail to realize speedy fortunes.

And I may remark, finally, that only cool, cautious men, with capital, can, as a general rule, realize a harvest in the trade and commerce of El Dorado. Meantime, no effort is spared on the part of the immense moneyed interest already invested there, as well as at home and abroad, to encourage the continuance of the emigration; for upon this depends the maintenance of the present stupendous system of speculation. When the period arrives—already close at hand—for the break down of that system, the *true* resources of the country will *begin* to dawn upon the world, and sober reflection, combined with legitimate enterprise, will assume the place of the *gold fever*.

Then California will be in reality more prosperous than now; but seemingly without comparison to the present El Dorado of the adventurer.

I may here add that no class of men have met more general success up to the present time, than master builders and carpenters. Among the former of these, a friend whom I left in San Francisco, has since returned with a goodly sum of gold dust and tolerable health.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Rapid Rise of New Towns—Sacramento City and the late Flood—Squatters—Water Lots—Stockton—Stanislaus City—Crescent City—Sutter—Webster—Vernon—Boston—Yuba—New York—Benicia—Martinez—Alveso—Santa Cruz—Freemont—Springfield—San Jose—South San Francisco—Saucelito—Towns and Trading Posts in the Gold Region—Culoma—Spanish Bar—Big Bar—Ford's Bar—Mormon Islands—Upper Dry Diggings—Jamestown—Wood's, Sullivan's and Hawkins's Bars—Sonorian Camp.

In this advanced age of the world, the formation of communities in different states and nations, is adapted to the nature of the requirements and industry of the people. Such is especially the fact in all newly-inhabited countries where a certain indication is thereby afforded of what constitute the most prominent and engrossing pursuits.

The new towns which have sprung into magical existence in California, furnish marvellous illustrations of this truth. Gold digging forming the one great and absorbing industry of that country, immediately produces a large trading community, which is best accommodated in towns and villages. The population of these new towns is liable, from the rapidity of their growth, to be underrated; but it is probable that the reverse has been the case in California, where the masses are perpetually shifting from placer to placer, and from the cañons to the towns, or otherwise according to the season.

San Francisco during the height of the present rainy season

has reached a population of 50,000 souls, two-fifths of whom will doubtless return to the gold region in March and April.

Sacramento City numbered from 20,000 to 30,000 inhabitants, and up to the period of the late disastrous flood, has increased in nearly as great a ratio as San Francisco. The fact that the whole country adjacent to Sutter's Fort, including the site of Sacramento City, has been entirely submerged during each *regular* rainy reason from time immemorial, was well known to all the old residents of California; and was communicated to me during my late visit by gentlemen before alluded to in these pages. Its occurrence, therefore, was by no means an "unheard-of calamity," but one confidently anticipated.

The flood this year has doubtless been more sudden and overwhelming than usual. How far adequate protection from its recurrence may be obtained hereafter by the construction of levees, is yet to be determined. For one I shall venture the opinion that the only effectual mode will be to raise the entire site of the town at least ten feet above its present level, a plan which would involve such herculean labor and enormous expenditure, that it is not likely to be applied except by private enterprise, in the reconstruction of some of the houses and warehouses. No barriers can withstand the combined floods of the Sacramento and American rivers, so long as the snows and rains shall descend upon the peaks of the Sierra Nevada, and in the arroyos and cañadas of hill side and valley.

With the exception of this almost fatal objection, which also renders it extremely unhealthy during the summer months, Sacramento City presents one of the most important and beautiful localities yet occupied in the interior. Besides its position at the head of practical navigation, it appears to

be the natural trading depôt for all the great mining region of the north Sacramento Valley, which in *regular* production has proved the richest portion of the gold region. Vessels can lay close to the shore and discharge their cargoes, the belt of timber along the margin of both rivers affords lumber for ordinary purposes and for fuel; and another great advantage over San Francisco in the *abundance* of good water is now quite evident to all.

The speculation in town lots, houses and merchandise, has also raged to an extent till now almost without limit. Real estate was hourly advancing, but, unluckily for speculators, so was the flood; nevertheless our people have the advantage of former experience in *water lots*. Previous to this calamity, however, the price of lots whereon to pitch a tent, had reached so extravagant a point, that the stern and wearied emigrants from the route of the great desert, and others, had united in an extensive system of squatting according to the usages of the frontier, resolutely defending their right, and denouncing the title to land, measured not by acres or even by miles, but by leagues. Such claims, however, cannot be maintained; for aside from the validity of the original title, these lots justly belong to those who have already paid for them, and indeed the flood will probably remove the squatters effectually.

Stockton ranks next in size, containing at late dates from 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants. It is situated at the head of a slough on the San Joaquin, some sixty miles from the Suisun Bay. Until very recently it contained but one house, the property of Mr. Weber, and was literally an encampment. The name, (Stockton) is derived from one of the earliest traders, who selected it as a field of enterprise. The locality is very low and marshy, and is also liable to be submerged in

the rainy seasons. It is nevertheless the great trading post for the southern mines, as the navigation of the San Joaquin is good to that point for vessels of two hundred tons.

Stanislaus City, or rather its intended location, lies at the junction of the Stanislaus River with the San Joaquin, about fifty miles above Stockton. As yet it is only a small trading post, but its proximity to the Stanislaus placers may make it a place of some importance.

Crescent City is also a town laid out on paper, to be founded hereafter, perhaps, on the Tuolumne River. These comprise the principal sites, real and projected, for trading posts in the valley of the San Joaquin.

Sutter, (formerly Suttersville) on the Sacramento, six miles below Sacramento City, has somewhat increased its population; and as it has all the advantages possessed by the latter, besides high grounds a quarter mile back from the river, it must soon gain upon its rival in permanent population.

Webster, a few miles below Sutter on the Sacramento, is as yet a paper town, and likely to remain so.

Vernon lies at the juncture of the Feather River with the Sacramento, on the eastern shore of the latter; and is said to possess a population of 4,000 to 5,000, which have located there during the late dry season, attracted by the facility afforded by a small steamboat running to that point. It is, however, liable to overflow in the rainy season, and is a very unhealthy locality.

Boston is the ambitious title of a town laid out on the American river, a beautiful location near Sutter's Fort, on the ranche formerly owned by Mr. Sinclair.

Yuba, the highest trading post in the northern mines, lies at the junction of Yuba with Feather River, and from the

exceeding wealth of that portion of the gold region, a considerable town must always exist there.

New York of the Pacific (!) at the mouth of the San Joaquin and Sacramento, has thus far disappointed its projectors, but its high and salubrious location at the head of *ship* navigation, its bold shore and facilities for the discharge and distribution of cargoes up both the principal rivers, with a clear Spanish title to the property, must eventually attract settlers, traders and gardeners, to its advantages. The present bungling and magniloquent name should be changed as speedily as possible for an Indian or Californian appellation.

Benicia, on the northern shore of the Straits of Karquinez has, however, developed similar advantages, and as its proprietors are numerous, their exertions to make it a prominent port of entry have now a fair prospect of success. The trade of the Napa and Sonoma Valleys, which lie to the north of it, may undoubtedly be diverted to Benicia, especially when the population of California shall be forced in some measure to resort to agriculture and the raising of supplies for their own consumption. For some months past vessels have been sailing from Atlantic ports direct to Benicia, where those drawing twenty feet water may lie close to the shore and discharge cargo. When these reach their destination, the place will present a commercial aspect second only to San Francisco.

Martinez is a small settlement directly opposite to Benicia, and is not likely to reach the dignity of a town, unless gold is discovered on Monte Diablo, which it is hardly necessary to say is altogether improbable. It may, however, become a rendezvous for graziers in process of time.

Alveso is the embarcadero near the mouth of the creek on which San José, the capital, is situated.

BENECIA

Santa Cruz is one of the old towns, beautifully located on the Bay of Monterey, and having several saw mills with plenty of good lumber in their immediate vicinity.

Besides the various towns already described, many others are projected or announced, among which are Freemont opposite to Vernon, and Springfield near the mouth of Feather River. The latter has a good location, and as it is more elevated and healthy than Vernon, it may perhaps become of more importance.

San José, the new capital, is near the southern point of the Bay of San Francisco. It is one of the old towns, and its proximity to the quicksilver mines, with a soil in its neighborhood adapted to gardening, together with a tolerable climate, will make it a town in due time of considerable consequence.

South San Francisco, two or three miles south of the present city, has natural advantages superior to San Francisco, and will probably become a large town. The harbor is good and well protected, the shore quite accessible for large vessels, and the rise of the land gradual. There are also stone quarries near at hand, with springs and a good stream of water. Warehouses have been erected there, and the place is attracting the attention of speculators and traders.

Saucelito will answer to close this enumeration with the remark that, "one board shed and one tent" still hold on to the side of the hill, if not blown or washed into Whalers' Bay.

I will now conclude this chapter with such information as I possess of interest and authenticity, relating to the trading posts and settlements in the mining regions.

Culoma, the beautiful locality of which has been described in the foregoing pages, claims our first attention. It is fully entitled to the dignified appellation of town, having had at the opening of the rainy season some three or four thousand in-

habitants, and a great many good log and frame houses. Surrounded on the neighboring mountains with good pine timber, the famous mill constantly turns out building material in the midst of the town. Many storehouses and dwellings, besides several good restaurants and hotels, have been constructed since my trip to the South Fork; when six dollars a day was the price of board in a negro tent, where now bills of fare, *à la Delmonico* are issued, substituting ounces for dollars. My "little friend from the State of Maine," after a fair trial, had enough, or perhaps got *enough of the diggings*; and has since become one of the most flourishing traders in Culoma, in connection with a highly-respectable firm in San Francisco. The other one of our original party whom I left trading in the Valley, turned *digger*, and is one of the few who has since returned with improved health and lengthened purse. Culoma must always be a considerable trading-town, so long as the gold region of California remains productive.

Spanish Bar, Big Bar, and Ford's Bar, all on the Middle Fork, have also their trading tents in the dry season, but are inaccessible in the rainy season, particularly the latter.

Mormon Islands, at the junction of the South Fork with the American River, has increased also to a large trading post. Though most of the gold thereabouts has been exhausted by the common process, it has become the seat of scientific operations by the use of quicksilver.

Upper Dry Diggings has been made a post of importance, and the principal supplies there are furnished to miners by Gooding & Co., with the former of whom I became acquainted, and received many civilities from, during my late visit to Sutter's Fort.

In the San Joaquin mining region many traders have located on the Calaveras, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Mercedes, and

quite recently on the Mariposa and King's River; the fathest south of all the diggings yet worked.

The principal of these are Jamestown, Wood's, Sullivan's, Hawkins's, Mormon, Murphy's, Angels' and Sonorian camps, on the Stanislaus and Tuolumne rivers.

Sonorian Camp contained at opening of rainy season, some ten thousand Mexicans living in tents, and digging and gambling in gold dust to their heart's content. Many have been driven from the mines already, and all must speedily disappear before our countrymen.

It is, nevertheless, a point of great importance for our government to decide—how shall a revenue be obtained from the public lands of the gold region, and their precious metals secured to the labor of our own citizens?

The sale of *permits* for so large an extent of territory, to be paid for either prior to or from the proceeds of labor, *is not practicable*, nor likely to become so.

To limit such a system (or any other) to our own citizens, and foreigners who declare intentions to become citizens, would be a dead letter; because all foreigners would instantly declare such intentions.

There seems to be but one feasible plan, which is to establish a *branch mint*, and require all the gold to be coined there, at a deduction of five to ten per cent. for the service—the penalty for neglect or refusal, to be forfeiture of half to the government, and half to the officer and informer. This opinion I have heretofore frequently expressed, and the reader will now accept of it for what it may be worth.

CHAPTER XXVII.

New Gold Discoveries—Caution in Regard to Them—Georgetown Diggings—Mormon Bar—Bidwell's Bar—Oregon Diggings—Foster's Bar and Barlow's Bar on Yuba—Bear Creek—North and Middle Forks—Dry Diggings—Kelsey's Bar—Big Bar—Volcano—Upper Diggings--South Fork Feather River—Trinity River—Diggings on Tuolumne—Woods', Sullivan's and Curtis' Creeks--Sonorian Camp—Stevens' Camp—Maripora River—Fremont's Ranche—Sherlock's Diggings—Mercedes River—Maxwell's Creek—King's River—Calaveras—Mokelumne—Cosumne and Stanislaus Rivers—Angels and Carson's Creeks--Gold in Coast Range--San Diego--Hints to Miners--Burke's Rocker and Quicksilver--Quartz Formation--Its Regular Existence Questioned.

THE gold of California is found over so extensive a region, that new discoveries are continually developed not only in portions hitherto unexplored, but often in the immediate vicinity of placers supposed to be exhausted. While, doubtless, the truth is often concealed for a time by fortunate discoverers, it is also to be borne in mind that a vast amount of exaggeration exists, and that many false stories are set afloat by parties interested as traders, freighters, teamsters, gamblers, and speculators generally. And this will always be the case to an increasing extent. Too much caution cannot, therefore, be exercised in the amount of credulity indulged in by those who contemplate to try a dig at the "diggings."

With an earnest desire to furnish none but useful and reliable information in these pages, I have endeavored only to

adopt such as is entirely authentic, and as my own observation of the general features of the gold region enables me to confirm with confidence.

Among the Sacramento placers, the Georgetown diggings have been among the richest discoveries of the past summer. They are on the South Fork, ten miles above Culoma, and the miners there have averaged from two to three ounces a day, and in some instances still more by those who found the lump gold. The bar also through which the race for the mill was excavated, and where the gold was first discovered, has been worked with good success. The same is true of the ravines in the vicinity of Mormon Bar and North Fork.

Diggings on South Fork Feather River, have been highly successful at Bidwell's Bar and other localities, also at Oregon diggings, some eight miles above.

No placeres in the gold region have yielded so large an amount of gold as the Yuba River above Corduas Ranche, at Foster's Upper and Lower Bar, and at Barlow's Bar. The miners on that river have been entirely Americans, and good order has generally prevailed among them.

Bear Creek, a branch of Feather River, is rich in gold near its sources, but has not yet been very extensively worked. Spanish Bar on Middle Fork, and some localities on North Fork, have been the scenes of extensive damming operations, which, in some instances, have been eminently successful, but, as a general rule, the uncertainty will not justify the time consumed and the heavy labor and expense.

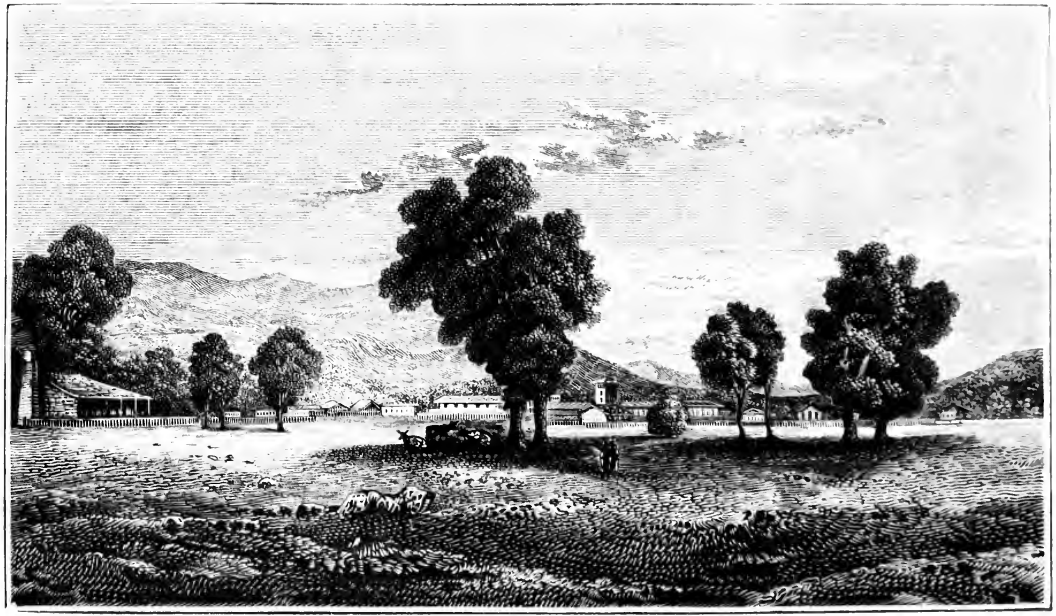
At Dry Diggings on North Fork, the ravines have been torn up in every direction, and scarcely a rock left unmolested, yet vast quantities of gold will be taken out by miners who are prepared to pass the rainy season there. The great dif-

ficulty encountered at other seasons, is want of water to wash the gold out; and many content themselves with digging and laying up the dirt to wash in the rainy season, when it yields from $5 to $10 per bushel, but oftener much less. This kind of labor is the severest which a man can be subjected to. Many rich "pockets" have been found in the rocks there, but they are generally covered with the stiff, sandy clay, two to eight feet deep. All the red sand clay of this region contains gold after the removal of the upper strata, which is sand only. To wash this earth in the dry season, it must be packed on mules in bags, and often carried eight or ten miles to the water. The cañons of the wet diggings on this fork of the American River, are among the most rugged and inaccessible in the whole region. Little weight can be carried down into them, and only a few days' provisions at a time, and the miners sleep under the great canopy, or, at most, the shelter of a rock or bush. During the day, the heat of these cañons exceeds that of any other locality on the globe. The labor, too, in removing the heavy rocks in the beds of the streams, is greater than in the dry diggings.

Kelsey's Bar on Middle Fork, above Big Bar, has produced large quantities of gold. Near this portion of the fork the crater of what was manifestly an extinct volcano has been discovered, and there was no doubt in my mind of their once frequent existence.

South, Middle, and North Fork American River, have proved more prolific in gold than any other region of equal extent, and are most accessible to good trading posts, and to Sacramento City, the general freight depôt.

Upper diggings on South Fork Feather River, are from eighty to one hundred miles above Vernon, on the Sacramento, and are reached by teams of oxen and pack-mules, the navi-



SONOMA.

gation of Feather River being impeded by shoals and rapids. Gold is found there in small dust or scales on the mountain sides and in the gulches, but in coarse and irregular deposit in the bed of the stream, which is rocky and covered with sand, clay, and stones, which require to be removed often to the depth of several feet. Miners there were making from $5 to $25 per day, the best diggings being mostly exhausted. The Burke rocker has been tried with success, and the quicksilver is fast coming into use. These rockers should be made so as to be transportable in sections. Diggings on that fork are remote from the trading posts, and miners pack provisions over on their backs for two weeks' supplies at a time. But the traders have latterly increased and extended into the remotest placeres. On Trinity River, near two hundred miles above Sacramento City, the extreme northern diggings are not very productive.

The southern diggings on the different streams emptying into the San Joaquin, have attracted the greatest number of miners, as the largest lumps have been found there, and they are also more accessible to the Mexicans and other foreigners who have worked in that region in great numbers.

Diggings on Tuolumne, Stanislaus, and their forks, have been the favorite resorts during the past season. Woods' Diggings, about ninety miles from Stockton, have yielded enormous amounts of gold, chiefly in lumps, great and small, bearing strong indications of the volcanic fires which at some remote age ejected all the gold of this region from the bowels of the earth. The average daily yield at Woods' is now about ten dollars per man.

Sonorian Camp, a few miles above Woods', is the rendezvous of some ten thousand Mexicans who have gathered large quantities of gold from the neighboring placeres, most of

which, through gambling and drinking, goes into other hands.

Sullivan's Diggings are some four or five miles above Woods', one the same creek. Sullivan, who first discovered their rich deposits, was a poor Irish laborer, but soon accumulated his fortune there.

Mormon Bar, a few miles further up the creek, has also repaid the labor of many miners.

Stevens' Camp is on the Tuolumne, about ten miles from Woods'. The cañons here lie between mountains three and four thousand feet high, perpendicular almost to their base, often withholding room enough for a camp, or even a single tent, for many miles in extent. The route to these placeres from Stockton, is very tedious and laborious, many wagons breaking down, or having their oxen drowned in crossing the streams. On the route to Stanislaus, arid plains, without water, in the dry season are to be crossed, or tulare marshes avoided. Persons with whom I am well acquainted, have gladly lain down and drank from stagnant pools to quench their intolerable thirst. In the rainy season these plains are often impassible for man and beast.

Mariposa River has recently become the scene of mining operations also. The first placer in that region was discovered in mid-summer, by a man named Sherlock, who employed a large company of Sonorians to work it on shares, some of whom took out at first from one to three pounds each per day. Americans soon came in and drove out the Mexicans, and have found lumps of gold weighing from one to five pounds, but, as a general rule, the placer has averaged about the same as other new discoveries.

Fremont's Ranche is situated on the Mariposa, and his discoveries of gold in quartz are situated about ten miles from

Sherlock's Diggings. These quartz deposits are undoubtedly of very great value, but reliable authority states that they have been overrated.

On Maxwell's Creek, a tributary of the Mercedes River, rich discoveries have very recently been made, as also on King's River, south of the Mariposa, and the extreme point yet explored in that direction. These regions will doubtless be largely resorted to, and new deposits found.

Of the southern diggings must also be enumerated the Calaveras, Mokelumne and Cosumne Rivers, all branches of the San Joaquin, where thousands of men have been digging and "prospecting" for gold with the average luck attending this extraordinary pursuit of wealth. The richest placeres, however, in that region are unquestionably those which lie on the head-waters of the Stanislaus River, including Angel's and Carson's Creeks, and the Tuolumne River, including its tributaries, Wood's, Sullivan's, and Curtis' Creeks, all of which, from their junction with that river near Jacksonville, a trading post some five or six miles above Hawkins' Bar.

The most recent intelligence communicates the avowed discovery of gold in the vicinity of San Diego. There is no reason to doubt that the whole range of mountains extending from the Cascades in Oregon to the Cordilleras in South America contain greater or less deposits of the precious metals; and it is well known that Sonora, the northern State of Mexico, is equally rich in gold as the adjoining country of Alta California. The Mexicans have hitherto proved too feeble to resist the warlike Apaches in that region, consequently its treasure remains comparatively undisturbed. Notwithstanding this fact would, by analogy, go far to convince us of the existence of considerable placeres of gold near San Diego, yet such reports should be received with

great caution as they might manifestly proceed from interested parties among the old Californians, rancheros, and others there. If they prove to be correct, however, the fine and well-protected bay of San Diego will soon be crowded with shipping, and its semicircular shores covered with Yankee houses quite superseding, and leaving in the back ground the old Mexican Pueblo del San Diego.

Old residents of California, some of whom have already been quoted as authority in the foregoing pages of this volume, assured me while in that country, that some specimens of gold had been found in the "coast range," near Santa Barbara, and further north. If the theory is correct, that the precious metal owes its existence in the California range entirely to volcanic action, there is reason to believe that it also exists in the coast range, needing only the presence of deep cañons and mountain torrents to reveal the quartz matrix in which it lies embedded.

I will now endeavor to sum up this portion of my remarks by the addition of such practical information in regard to the diggings, as has recently come to my knowledge, or which, in the haste of preparation for the press, I overlooked in my notes, or allowed to escape my memory.

In the dry diggings during the summer, the great difficulty the miner must contend with, is scarcity of water. The finding of ever so small a spring, is, then, an important event, and if near rich diggings, the water is frequently sold as high as half to one dollar a pailful. A ditch is then dug as near the spring as possible, five or six feet wide, and three or four deep; across this logs are laid, on which the rocker is placed. The miner then carries or packs a pile of the earth to the side of the trench, where, having secured a supply of water, he is able, by the use of buckets and pans, to save a

portion of it as it runs off from his cradle. Such an economy of water he will find an essential aid at that season. Many, however, during the past summer, have employed their time in collecting the earth to be washed during the winter, when the watery element is by no means scarce.

Quicksilver, (a few pounds bought in the States,) and a small Burke's washer, made as light and transportable as possible, will repay both the trouble and expense of its transit to the most accessible placeres. With this appliance, the old diggings nearest the towns and trading posts, have been made to yield more abundantly than by the ordinary rocker and pan.

It is quite evident that the true era of mining in California is about to commence by the adoption of machinery of every kind, and by the consequent investment of capital applied to that object. Labor, the great desideratum to success, will, in due time, be available at moderate rates, and the rush of emigration from all parts of the world will quickly supply this want.

In the first edition of this work, I remarked the existence of masses of quartz rock, which I observed in every direction irregularly scattered along the mountains and ravines of the American fork. Gold is mixed with the quartz in every gradation from the most minute particles up to the chief component part, and is found in *detached* fragments, generally of small size, proving that the large masses of quartz have been thrown up by the volcanic process displayed in the entire formation of the gold region. *Veins* of this quartz rock are said to have been traced in regular continuance for many miles, "cropping out" at intervals on the surface, from which it is inferred that the rock exists in *unbroken veins* along an important extent of the mountain.

I am not sufficiently conversant with geology, as a science, to determine this matter. Quartz, however, is well known to exist in all granite formations and other compound rocks. Again, in the Ural Mountains in Russia, whole peaks exist composed entirely of quartz, mica, and feldspar. Geologists lay down the principle that "veins decline from the perpendicular and descend obliquely, and that metalliferous veins *decompose* all parts of compound rock *except quartz*." "Quartz veins resemble in their structure and position many metallic veins. A vein which contains metallic ore in one part mized with quartz, will, in another part, be *entirely quartz*." How, then, can these veins exist for miles on or near the surface without dip? And if they are *unbroken* veins, containing gold, why are they mixed with compound rock? "Quartz *intersects* all primary and transition rock; when in veins, it is most frequently *white*, and being *harder* than the rock it intersects, *remains on the mountains after the surface-rock is decomposed, till carried down by diluvial currents into the beds of rivers and mountain torrents*."

This is precisely the case in the cañons, ravines, and gulches of the California mountains.

"Masses of ore are found imbedded in quartz rock *without connection with veins*, and which must be formed at the time of the rock itself." This, also, is universally true in the gold region of California, where innumerable *detached* lumps have been found mixed with quartz, but with no other kind of rock. I therefore conclude that minute portions of gold exist in all the quartz formation of California, but that when combined with it in value of from five cents to three dollars the pound, it is only in detached masses of greater or less extent.

There can be no question, also, that these masses exist in sufficient quantity to repay the operations of scientific machinery, provided both capital and labor are abundant and cheap.

In confirmation of these views, both as to the quartz formation and volcanic agency displayed in the gold region, Sir Roderick Murchison (a distinguished geologist) says in a recent lecture at the British Institution, "gold is only found when ancient and stratified rocks have been penetrated, altered, and crystalized by intrusion of *igneous or eruptive matter. The gold of California will be found only on the surface—not below it.*"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Evidence of the Volcanic Formation of California—Further Observations on Soil, Climate, and Agricultural Resources—Volcanic Agency—Napa Valley—Hot Springs—Lake Clear—Russian River—Trinity River—San Juan Valley—Testimony of Captain Wilkes of the Exploring Expedition—Rainy Season—Effects upon Emigrants—State of Affairs—Starvation and Crime—Disease and Mortality—Climate in Gold Region—Diggers' Experience—Travel by Night—Hours for Labor—Diggings in Rainy Season—Erecting Log Cabins—Time to Lay in Provisions.

ALTHOUGH the volcanic formation of the whole of the Californias, both Upper and Lower, is universally conceded, yet the consideration of the subject continues to be fraught with increasing interest.

The general features of the Valley of the Sacramento, as well as of the mountains of the gold region, force the conviction upon the mind, that the volcanic agency there manifested was of comparatively recent origin. The trees are mostly young—the alluvial deposits in the valleys inconsiderable.

The celebrated navigator, Captain Cook, saw a volcano in latitude as high as 61 deg.; in the northwest coast, another in lat. 55 deg. N., at the point of Alaska, (which he describes as of "an amazing height;") and another in lat 59 deg. N., higher than Teneriffe. He also describes five in California; and they are known to exist from thence southwardly, in rows north and south, at least 5,000 miles. The most of

these, it is true, are extinct or inactive at the present time, but they are often at rest only, though it may be for a century or more.

The conical mountain peaks of the gold region are clearly of this character; and the old hunters and mountaineers, who know every foot in the Sierra Nevada, have asserted that they have seen smoke issuing from some of the remote peaks or spurs of that range for days together; and, indeed, farther to the north, the fact is well authenticated. The volcano near the Middle Fork, American River, already alluded to, and the crater of which is clearly defined, was, doubtless, known to the old mountain men of that region. Volcanoes, of late date, in various portions of the world, are known to have had their craters obliterated by mountain torrents, and the gradual disintegration of a long series of years. This has occurred in Central America; how much more probable and frequent then its occurrence in the Sierra Nevada, where, simultaneous with the tremendous torrents of the rainy season in the valleys, immense masses of snow and ice accumulate, to be rapidly dissolved under the intense heat of the summer sun.

Reasoning thus from analogy, it is a fair conclusion that the gold of California has thus been upheaved and ejected from its native beds of quartz in the bowels of the earth. At all events, it is indisputable that the most productive gold regions of the earth, are found in volcanic countries; and, although from its agency in decomposing all substances except quartz, it is rarely found in connection with lava, yet there are instances of this, the most remarkable of which is the gold mine in the Island of Ischia, which is entirely volcanic.

In regard to the soil and agricultural resources of Cali-

fornia, I have been furnished with some additional information of interest, from persons who have written home the results of their explorations, and from others who are engaged in endeavors to cultivate the soil. Late explorations of the Napa Valley, prove it to possess fair resources for agricultural operations. This valley extends from San Pablo Bay, some fifty or sixty miles, in nearly a northwest direction, but does not average more than about three miles in width. Napa Creek rises in the north and courses through the valley to the bay, and is said to be navigable for small craft some ten or twelve miles, up to the town or village of Napa. Grist mills and saw mills were formerly established on that stream, and red wood, for the supply of the latter, exists on the neighboring hills. Several rancheros have been residents for some years of the valley, but have engaged in grazing to a greater extent than in farming.

North of this valley are considerable ranges of mountains, beyond which is Lake Clear, or the Laguna, some forty miles long and five to six miles wide. Cash Creek is said to be the outlet for its waters. North of the lake are some pretty valleys, interspersed with the small oak, and thought to be suitable for farming purposes. Red wood and pine grow on the intervening ridges, and will soon be brought into use. Hot springs exist near this lake, as also in Napa Valley.

Proceeding north of Lake Clear, the valleys of Russian River and Santa Rosa are reached, and some ranchos of old Californians are there met with. The river empties into the Pacific, near the former Russian port and trading post of Bodega. Still farther north is Trinity River, the sources of which exist in a lateral range of mountains near the head of the Sacramento Valley. All that section of California north of the bays of San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun, abounds

in game of every kind, particularly Elk, which seek the best grazing and find it there.

The old San Juan Valley, back of the bay of San Francisco, was formerly considered the Garden of California ; but it is to be borne in mind that, the same has been successively asserted of every valley in the country.

Capt. Wilkes in his great work on the "Exploring Expedition," says the San Juan Valley is twelve by twenty miles in extent, and the climate salubrious, resembling that of Andalusia. As most of his views (as well as the reports of his officers, regarding the soil, climate and productions of California) afford emphatic confirmation of the opinions and observation recorded in the first edition of this work, I will here introduce a few quotations from them. He says "in the year of our visit (1842) no rain had fallen :" in the previous year (1841) "the drought had ruined all Capt. Sutter's crops :" "the drought had continued for eleven months, and the cattle were dying in the fields." "The valley of the Sacramento may include a space of one hundred and eighty miles long, by from twenty to fifty miles wide. A large part of this is undoubtedly barren and unproductive, and must forever remain so." "At the mouth of Feather River, a whole tribe of Indians died a few years since of tertian fever :"—this is at or near the locality of the present town of Vernon.

"Lieut. Emmons' party from Oregon, came down the west bank of the Sacramento, over a rolling prairie, the most worthless they had met with ;" this was above Sutter's. He also alludes to the Buttes, a remarkable group of volcanic mountains on the Upper Sacramento ; and to the depositesof "the bones of animals which resort there to escape the *floods* of the rainy season." He states that Lieut. Emmons' party all had the ague ; and that the thermometer

ranged in the day above 80°, and at night near the freezing point. In another instance it stood at 100° during the day, and at dawn of the next day 32°.

Alluding to the product of the grape of the country, he remarks: "The wine of California which I tasted, was miserable stuff, and would scarcely be taken for the juice of the grape." This accords with my own experience on three different occasions, in two of which instances, the best California wine in San Francisco and vicinity was produced.

Commenting upon the climate of the coast, Capt. Wilkes remarks that, "the inhabitants of California say, that they never knew the winds to blow from the northeast within thirty miles of the coast." This observation reminds me of the fact, that the scrub-oak near the bays and the coast range, always incline toward the southeast, affording a proof of the regularity and force of the sweeping northwest gales of the dry season; and I observed the same phenomena, even among the oak openings well up on the first rise of hills, east of the Sacramento Valley.

After remarking upon the varying nature of the information carefully gathered in relation to California, this distinguished commander and author adds: "no other country displays such a diversity of features, soil and climate." Thus only can be explained the wonderful contrariety of views, continually received from persons of veracity in California, or who have returned from there. For my own part, however, I must still concur with the following final quotation from Capt. Wilkes: "Many of the officers compared its climate to that of Orange Harbor at Cape Horn, with its *cold blustering winds and cloudy skies.*" "*This kind of weather prevails during the greater part of the year*, and the compari-

son is literally true in relation to one portion of California,—the sea coast."

The rainy season, this year, commenced 31st of October, at the diggings, and 1st of November on the coast. It has, thus far, proved itself the regular rainy season of that climate, though it is said to be more severe than for several years past. Great quantities of snow have also fallen in the mountains, but not exceeding two feet in depth, while last year it fell to the depth of four feet. The average severity of the present winter season, therefore, does not appear to have been greater than the preceding one.

Its effects, however, upon the mass of emigrants, have been of a most distressing character. Thousands have abandoned the diggings, broken down in health, and without means to escape from the country, while hundreds are returning disheartened and disgusted.

Starvation has been common, and suicide and murders by no means infrequent. Idle men, in San Francisco and Sacramento City, have been as numerous as the employed. Wages of labor to those who can obtain it, are equal to a man's daily expenses, which are *high;* and only good mechanics, especially carpenters and builders, can make much over their expenses, unless by obtaining contracts. Of these, the numbers are already too numerous for the demand. In short, California is one vast lottery office—we hear of all the prizes, and of but few of the innumerable blanks; while most of those who draw them, will not confess even that they had tickets.

Many of the scenes in San Francisco and Sacramento City, which have come to my knowledge by private letters, and by interviews with returned emigrants and their friends, are of the most distressing character. Suffice it to say, that

the deaths in both those places have been as high as from twenty to thirty in a day. This fact has escaped the notice of many who are resident there; but men who are immersed in speculation and cares of every kind, find little leisure or inclination in California to take note of the departed. "Dead men tell no tales," is both a false and wicked proverb; and *five hundred graves* in a new cemetery near San Francisco, tell us of as many deaths in *less than one month*. This information is from a gentleman of undoubted veracity, who lately reached his home on a litter.

Such facts are extremely painful to contemplate, and more painful to relate; but they are due to this nation from every impartial writer who values the truth, and relies with confidence upon the judgment which will be pronounced by his countrymen in a very few years. This is, under any circumstances, an extraordinary mortality; and after making all due allowance for exposure, destitution, and vice, it bespeaks anything but a healthy climate for California, either in the interior or on the coast. That of the latter is, doubtless, suitable to robust constitutions, provided they are sustained with good food, furnished with proper clothing and shelter, and are careful to conform to the sudden and constant transitions of temperature.

As to the climate of the gold region, all accounts agree that October is the best month in the year, and November also, whenever the rainy season sets in late, or omits its visitation. The rains in the valleys are warm, close, and penetrating, and when the floods cease to descend, the blue sky appears, and the climate, by *contrast*, seems "truly Italian" for a few hours or days. In justice to California, it should also be remembered that in the climate of the northern States of the American Union, the same exposure and de-

privation would, during much of the year, produce nearly as fatal results.

Diggers of experience in the mines travel by night during the dry season, to avoid the rays of the sun, "hot enough to fry your brains out," as one of them expressed it to me. Their hours of labor are from daylight to about 10 or 11, A. M., and from 4 P. M. until dark. The winter is, doubtless, the best season for mining, so far as health, and perhaps average success too, are concerned. A log house, and plenty of provisions laid by in October, are, of course, indispensable. Under these circumstances, the days on which the cessation of the storms permit work, are both the most comfortable and healthy of all the year to the gold digger.

The estimate in a former chapter, of three to four dollars per day per man, as the average yield during my late visit to the Gold Region, has been most extensively and generally confirmed since that period.

Innumerable letters and persons lately returned from the diggings, (including successful miners,) now fix the *average at from two to three dollars per day*, for each digger during the season.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Transient Emigration—Return of Old Residents—Proportion of the Successful—Sacrifice of Merchandise—Unnatural Export Trade—Estimate of Gold Dust Exported and Mined—Wild Speculations—Real Prosperity of California—Inland Trade and Transportation—Grazing—Vegetable Gardening—Land Titles—Extracts from the Letters of a California Physician—Advice to Emigrants from a Physician in the Gold Regions—Cortez and Pizarro Eclipsed in History—the Yankees against the World.

The emigration to California,—large as it has been—is yet in its infancy, and it has thus far been small, compared with the European emigration to the Atlantic ports of which rising 200,000 reached the port of New York alone, during the past year. These emigrants came to America to settle for life.

Such is not the fact in relation to El Dorado; the emigrants to that country are avowedly adventurers, who intend to return in from one to five years, and the old residents who have secured their fortunes, are arriving by every steamer, to resume their abode in a country more suitable to their inclinations. They praise California for the abundance of its gold, but return thence as soon as they have gathered the harvest. One of these, an old resident of San Francisco, writes home recently: "nothing but the almighty dollar keeps me or any one else in California." Another who has been five years there, and having accumulated a fortune by the speculative

rise in the price of land about Sutter's Fort, is on the point of returning, wrote to his brothers by last mail, not to come out on any account;"that they would be more likely to pile up their bones in California, than to pile up the gold." Some of these old residents have preserved their health unimpaired, but those who have resided much in the interior, have all been subjected more or less to the fevers of the country, and will ever after be predisposed to them.

Thus far, the number of successful men may have been one in every hundred. In this estimate those only should be considered successful, who have *realized* and *safely invested* their fortunes. The thousands who *thus far* have made their fortunes, but are still immersed in speculations, do not belong as yet to the foregoing number.

Of the diggers, those who by the sacrifice of health accumulate much gold,) will soon after die rich, and those of the traders, speculators and others, who are mainly instrumental in keeping up the gold fever in the United States, love gold well enough to have it poured, (like the dead Crassus) at melting heat down their throats.

As a natural result of this state of affairs, many have made and many will hereafter make fortunes. How could it be otherwise in the most fluctuating market in the world. Men with capital in San Francisco can stand by at the auctions, and grow rich out of the losses of shippers and emigrants, from every port in the world. Vast amounts of merchandise are sacrificed, at a fraction of its original cost. Of the millions in value of other property lying worthless, because utterly unsaleable, a small portion is gradually reshipped by its owners or consignees to other ports of the Pacific or East Indies, many of which are glutted already. This is the boasted export trade of California, producing not one dollar

at home beyond her gold dust, of which the whole amount yet sent here scarcely exceeds the twelve millions of dollars exported last year from the silver mines of Guanajuato.

It is asserted that at least one-half to two-thirds of all the gold got from the placeres is retained in California, for purposes of trade and speculation.

Supposing the entire export to have been fifteen millions, that assertion would fix the amount thus retained at from fifteen to thirty million dollars value, and the *whole amount* yet obtained from the mines, at from thirty to forty-five millions. If such *is truly* the case, what must be the *aggregate* amount of debts for speculation and imports, to make money worth at all seasons ten per cent., and during the rainy season twelve to eighteen per cent. a month on temporary loans on security? But further, how many miners would be required to dig and wash the foregoing amounts from the placeres, in two mining seasons of eight months each? For the first season of 1848, eight million of dollars was considered (by persons on the spot) the full amount obtained. This will leave twenty-two to thirty-seven millions to have been produced during the year 1849; and would require in round numbers, from twenty-two to forty thousand men, producing every man four dollars per day, for eight months entire, or from sixteen to twenty-five thousand men, at the same rate for one year. Admitting such results as the above, it is clear that they afford a totally insufficient basis for the vast and increasing shipments to that country, and much less for the insane point to which the land speculations have been urged.

The day that witnesses the entire explosion of that system will behold the real dawn of prosperity to California. The miners of the gold region will receive their supplies from the traders at one-fourth the present expenditure; and though

their numbers increase, and their per diem of gold dust lessens, yet may they be more prospered than now. Then, also, the consumption of clothing, and material of every kind, and of provisions and luxuries at *moderate* prices, will be largely increased. A comparatively healthy, though fluctuating commerce, will be established. The interior freighting and transportation will be extensively engaged in, the graziers will obtain a better market for their stock than in the palmiest days of old California, and vegetable gardening will repay thousands for their outlay in irrigation and other necessary appliances. Even at the present moment, the latter species of agriculture is the most remunerative that men can engage in who have a little experience, some capital, and an adequate share of patience and perseverance.

Land titles have already been the subject of the most impudent, unfounded, and fraudulent claims, by which large sums have been obtained. There can be no legal titles to land in California, which are not based upon *duly registered* Spanish or Mexican purchase or grant, or upon the regular pre-emption claims of public lands of the United States. Such is the belief of the mass of the emigrants in California, notwithstanding the opposition of men whose extensive claims would thereby be abrogated.

Leaving the consideration of these subjects to the reader, I will now give some quotations from letters of Dr. Benjamin B. Coit, who has been engaged in extensive practice in San Francisco during the past eight months, enjoying, in the prosecution of the duties of his profession, the most extensive intercourse not only with the inhabitants of San Francisco, but with miners from every section of the gold region. Under date of 1st November, 1849, he writes, "Truly, as

in the days of Solomon, silver is counted of but little value. Expenses, too, are enormous, but are freely paid. 'Time is money,' is a favorite maxim here. The mines are producing well, and will continue to for many years to come. *This is a truth.* Vast numbers have failed, but the causes of failure were too obvious. The sickness in the interior has been appalling, the deaths numerous, and under peculiarly aggravating circumstances; but this has ever been expected by the reflecting as inevitable, crowding, as the emigrants did, into a *malarious country* during the heat of summer, and with systems already reduced by long voyages or journeys. The tale is a horrible one, and is *yet* to be told."

"This city is, I think, a healthy one, or would be under ordinary circumstances. Everything now is in an unnatural state—an immense population mainly engaged in building a city. * * * I do hope most sincerely that no more young men who have been delicately reared, or who have not been inured to labor, will think of trying their hand at gold digging."

"There has been, and still is, a vast deal of sickness in the valleys of the two principal rivers—diarrhœa, dysentery, intermittent and remittent fevers. Many have died, and large numbers are constantly returning broken down and wasted by disease. Many more would come were they able."

"The most objectionable feature connected with the weather, (in San Francisco in the dry season,) is the wind that daily arises at 12 M., and continues till night, bearing a cloud of pulverized clay perfectly intolerable."

"Again, under date of 1st February, 1850, he writes: "For six weeks it has rained at least four-fifths of the time, probably more; still the temperature has been agreeable, and

were it not for the mud—O, such mud!—the most fertile imagination of one who has not witnessed it, cannot conceive of the extent, the depth, the filthy fluidity, and, at the same time, the firm adhesiveness of it—were it not for that, I should prefer most decidedly the winter to the summer; but that is a bar to all comfortable locomotion. There is not much disease prevailing, taking the circumstances under which the accumulated population of strangers is placed, into consideration. I think the city especially a healthy place; and time will prove it to be so. * * * A vast deal has already been accomplished here under great embarrassments; with the energy and enterprise that are embodied in this community, the result of their labors during the coming year will *tell*."

"The news from the mines is encouraging—many have done, *it is said*, very well, but with the great majority it cannot be so; all extravagant reports from them must be taken with many grains of allowance. Alas, the credulous will not be the only persons who will be deceived! Of the abundance of the gold there can be no doubt; but to get it out with profit requires something more than the mere presence of men with strong arms, and pick, pan, or cradle. A man must have the means of living comfortably—must be well housed, well clothed, well fed, and not too heavily burthened; otherwise his health suffers, his constitution breaks down, and his enterprise perishes. Therefore, it is not enough simply to be carried safely to the mines; capital is necessary, and master minds must direct the operatives."

"*Individual efforts*, as a general rule, must prove abortive; so far as my knowledge enables me to judge, they already have. I do not know of a single instance of real success at the mines, on the part of a single member of the passengers

or ship's company with whom I came around the Horn. Of the former there were a hundred, and of the latter above twenty. Many have returned home who can tell the truth."

Another physician, who travelled over much of the gold region, writes: "Let those coming here make their arrangements to avoid a pork diet, supply themselves with beef or fish—salt, if they cannot get fresh; wheat meal, or bread made from it, cheese, dried fruits when possible, and Indian corn meal and rice. Let them boil instead of frying their provisions; avoid alcohol, in *warm weather* more especially, and instead of coffee or tea use chocolate with their meals. * * * Avoid taking powerful medicines; and rather trust to the kindly efforts of Nature, assisted by proper regimen and diet, than to all the imaginary and delusive effects of drugs."

In concluding this review of the latest aspect of affairs in California and the gold region, I cannot avoid remarking how astounding to the world at large is the rapid and wonderful progress of American enterpise on those distant shores of the Pacific. Verily, the adventures and achievements of Cortez and Pizarro fade into dim obscurity! Who but the Yankees could accomplish it!

CHAPTER XXX.

Oregon the True Seat of American Empire on the Pacific—Emigration Thither—Testimony of Gov. Lane and Judge Bryant—Mr. Thurston's Description of Middle and Western Oregon—Willamette Valley—Umpqua and Rimpqua Valleys—Clatsop Plains—Climate of Oregon—Agricultural Resources—Extraordinary Yield of Wheat—Mineral Wealth—Wonderful Growth of Timber and Fitness for Ship Building—Water Power—Towns—Wages of Labor—Advice to Emigrants—Character of the People—School Law—Navigation of the Columbia—Safety of the Entrance—Southern Channel—Whitney's Rail Road—Terminus at Puget's Sound—Probable Success of the Road.

DAZZLING as has been the career of the El Dorado of our day, and glittering as the shield of the Golden State in the eyes of the wonder-stricken world, yet must her destiny eventually grow dim before the rising star in the West—Oregon, the true and only permanent seat of American empire on the Pacific.

A reference to history alone will teach us this, irrespective of the manifest and immeasurable contrast between the illimitable elements of prosperity enjoyed by the one, and the demoralizing and fluctuating fountain of wealth opened in the other. The unbounded stores of the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru, in the days of Cortez and Pizarro, vast as they then appeared, and inexhaustible as they remain at the present hour, have long since dwindled into insignificance, by the side of any one of the least fertile and productive of the

States of the American Union. Thus, from the Atlantic shores, the significant finger of the past points to the untold history of the future on the Pacific.

But as in the period of the golden dreams of the first El Dorado of the West, a band of conquerors and adventurers became the instrument in the hand of Providence of arousing and concentrating the attention of the world upon the real wealth of the eastern shores of the continent of Columbus, so in the present era its western shores are revealed by a similar agency as the destined home of civilization.

Already the reflux tide of emigration to California is setting with gradual but steady and increasing force towards Oregon, and it is a truth, undeniable as remarkable, that among the thousands of Oregonians who have visited the rich placeres of the gold region of California, and revelled in the "Italian climate and lovely valley of the Sacramento," none have chosen to become permanent settlers there; but all have returned to resume their abode in Oregon.

The tide of emigration from the States prior to the gold discoveries, had already manifested entire preponderance towards the latter territory, and is again resuming its course with increased vigor. The bone and sinew of the stalwart men of the West, the energy and sagacity of the shrewd, reflective men of New England, the farmers, mechanics, lumbermen and navigators, are daily departing for the banks of the Columbia and Willamette. A large ship, (the California packet) recently sailed from Boston for California and Oregon, navigated and owned by her constructors, and laden with the hopes and best wishes of many thousand relatives and friends in their native States. The incident affords, perhaps, the most notable instance on record of the triumph of Yankee enterprise over difficulties apparently insurmountable. Such

men and women will lay broad and deep the foundations of the Pacific States, and if they tarry awhile in the land of gold hunting and speculation, will soon, like the hardy and industrious people of Deseret, depart for a land blessed with a more genial soil and climate.

The determination of many of this ship's company to settle in Oregon, was the result of the information communicated to them by Hon. Samuel R. Thurston, the present able and industrious Representative in Congress from that Territory, himself a native of New England. To him I am indebted for most of the following information regarding Oregon, some of which has been given already to the public, but not in a form suitable for reference and preservation. It is entitled to the highest confidence, not only on account of the immediate source from which it emanates, but because it is fully confirmed by the most numerous and ample authorities, including (besides many well-known citizens of Oregon,) Governor Burnett of California, and Capt. Wilkes and officers of the Exploring Expedition. A great deal of similar information was also communicated to me by Oregonians whom I met with in California; but as I had no intention at that period of writing for publication, I neglected to note down much that has now been once more kindly placed in my possession.

In a former chapter allusion has been made to the beneficial influence upon Oregon of the gold of California, and an estimate of two million dollars value, recorded as the probable amount of the precious metal already transferred there This, it is gratifying to find, is exactly confirmed in the late message of Governor Lane to the Legislature of Oregon.

He says—"We can recognise in Oregon the material of her future greatness; a climate and a soil extraordinarily productive eminently characterize it. The prolific growth of grain,

vegetables and grapes; the natural meadows untouched by the hand of cultivation, sufficiently extensive to furnish subsistence to innumerable herds of cattle during the entire year. Inexhaustible forests of the finest fir and cedar in the world; never-failing streams, which furnish water power of unlimited capacity, show how lavishly nature has bestowed her blessings upon this favored land.

"With the proper development of her agricultural resources, and the improvement of her immense water power, she can supply the entire Pacific coast with the most important of the necessaries of life and many of the staple articles of commerce. Her immense resources are gradually but surely being developed; her mineral wealth, at present, is not to be computed; gold has been found in several places in sufficient quantity to induce the belief that there are mines, perhaps extensive ones, of this precious metal within the borders of our territory; iron, lead and coal are known to exist, and the indications of their abundance are of the most flattering description.

"The Columbia is the only great river on the Pacific slope of our continent which leads from the ocean to the Rocky Mountains, by which a line of communication can be opened to the great valley of the Mississippi. The navigation from its mouth to the cascades, a distance of nearly one hundred and fifty miles, is uninterrupted for vessels of the largest class. These obstructions, and those beyond, may be surmounted in a considerable degree by canals and locks. It is a source of great gratification to know that the entrance to the mouth of the Columbia is much less dangerous than has heretofore been generally supposed. Many vessels, some of them large ships, drawing from twelve to sixteen feet of water, have, during the present year, crossed the bar, arriving and departing

without the aid of pilots or buoys; and not a single accident has occurred to intercept the facility of navigation during the present year.

"Puget's Sound is known to be one of the safest and best harbors in the world. It affords fine ship navigation in a beautiful and important portion of our country.

"We have good reason to believe that the extraordinary emigration to California, in consequence of the gold mines, will in a short time result in adding so largely to our numbers that our population, now only about nine thousand, will be doubled in twelve months.

"It is estimated that upwards of two millions of dollars in gold dust have been brought to Oregon since their discovery."

Judge Wm. P. Bryant, in a letter written at Oregon City in August last, gives the following account of the Willamette Valley:

"I was up the Willamette Valley as far as the Calapoo settlements. I never saw a richer valley of land, and the mountain scenery is captivating. The health of the country is good, and the harvest is abundant. This is the greatest country for wheat on the continent. I have never seen finer wheat grow than we have this year in Oregon, not near all of which will be saved for the want of laborers. The ordinary wages for laborers in the harvest field is $6 per day to each man. Every kind of labor commands nearly any price asked for it. The packers, in advance of the emigration, arrived to-day. They report 8,000 wagons on the road; about 2,000 bound for this territory, the residue for California.

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"Our people are returning from California every day with large sums of gold, the product of the mines. It will surprise you, I dare say, to learn the trade of the Columbia

River this year, in comparison with what it has heretofore been. I have before me a statement, showing the arrivals and departures of vessels coming in and going out with freight over the Columbia Bar, which has heretofore been considered impassable. Since the 7th of May, ships of every size, from forty tons to seven hundred tons burthen, amounting to 58 up to the 18th of this month, and not a single accident of a serious character has happened. The lumber trade of this river is quite an important trade; so of the wheat and flour."

In confirmation of these facts Mr. Thurston writes as follows:

"I am asked to speak of the three great divisions of Oregon. My knowledge of the first, west of the Rocky Mountains, as well as of the second, west of the Blue Mountains, is limited, of course, as all I know of the one, personally, is what I acquired while passing over it. This is all the personal knowledge a very great proportion of the people of Oregon have of this region. With the second region, that west of the Blue Mountains, our people are better acquainted, having learned much concerning its topography in the late Cayuse war. With the third we are still better acquainted; yet it should be borne in mind that this is a new and comparatively unexplored country, even west of the Cascade Mountains. It is but reasonable to conclude, therefore, that when Oregon, with its three grand divisions shall be minutely and scientifically explored, it will develop resources yet unknown, and which will astonish mankind with their vastness and richness. It would be indeed singular if a tract of country extending from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, a thousand miles or more, and from 42° to 49° north along the coast, should contain nothing in its bowels—no coal, no iron, lead, quicksilver, silver or gold. I say it would be singular; and yet, if there should be none, en-

tirely contrary to all the indications of the infantile discoveries and explorations hitherto made, as will appear, Oregon possesses resources enough *upon her surface* to make her at once one of the richest and happiest spots in the Union."

Addressing the overland emigrant, he says:

"By the time you arrive at the South Pass, you will have seen a practical illustration of the alternation of poor and good soil, or the barren and fertile. You will be deceived in scaling the height of the celebrated Rocky Mountains. Rising gradually for some hundreds of miles, you will hardly perceive your elevation, except by the coldness of the nights, until you find yourself on a smooth and comparatively level road on the summit, looking down on the slope descending to the Pacific."

* * * * * * * * *

"The first division of Oregon is made up alternately of barren plains and rich valleys. Usually you will pass through these valleys every half-day's drive, or oftener, and sometimes, though rarely, you will have long drives without grass. Timber, as I have said before, will usually be confined to these valleys, though not always; and sometimes you will find a scarcity of wood for some distance. The great difficulty is, that, in passing through this division for the first time, the emigrant is led to suppose that much more of it is barren than really is, because it is the dry season, when the grass has become dry, and the surface of the ground appears of the color of weather-beaten hay. There can be no greater mistake than this; for, although there is much barren land between the Rocky Mountains and the Blue Mountains, yet there is also very much of the best and most fertile land in the world."

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"Being about to pass from this division into Middle Oregon, the great western *stock factory*, and one much more delightful

than the first, you will allow me to say that the first even is capable of supporting almost an innumerable number of cattle and horses; and I should not be surprised if this division, when it shall come to be thoroughly explored, should turn out to be as valuable as its more inviting neighbors, Middle and Western Oregon.

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"My time and space will not allow me to describe to you Middle Oregon. It not only has the reputation of being one of the finest grazing countries in the world, but is so, and is susceptible of sustaining a dense population, and is ultimately destined to do so. The climate of Middle Oregon is undoubtedly the best in the world. While it is almost free from snows, it is subject to but moderate rains; while its long summers are one continued holiday of sporting sunshine, its winters are but moderately rainy. Its waters are *no where surpassed*, either for coolness, purity, or flavor; and taken all in all, Middle Oregon is one of the fair spots of nature, but for ten or fifteen years to come will not be needed for settlement. Western Oregon is amply large to swallow up all the emigrants who will find their way thither for a long time to come. This section can bid defiance to any other place within the limits of the United States. I must refrain from a description, because to do it justice would take more time than I have to devote."

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"The production of the two western divisions of Oregon are such as are produced in any of the Northern States. As the country is never subject to hot weather, and its nights being cool, it follows of course that corn does not grow so spontaneously as in the Western States. Yet good crops of corn may be raised by attending to its cultivation as they do in

New England. It should be borne in mind, however, that we have no particular use for corn, as wheat, oats, barley, and rye can be raised much more abundantly and with less cost; yet I have seen as stout corn growing there as I ever did anywhere. For raising the other kinds of grains, those I have mentioned, and buckwheat, and peas and beans, no country can surpass Oregon. And as to its vegetable production, I venture nothing in saying that it can vie with any country. In one word, I desire it to be distinctly understood, once for all, that, as far as its producing qualities are concerned, taken all in all, Oregon cannot be outdone; so that when any one shall wish for information on this subject, let him lay it down for certainty that, with the same amount of labor, he can raise produce of more value there than he can anywhere in the States. I care not what he inquires after, whether corn, (subject to the above classification,) wheat, oats, rye, barley, buckwheat, peas, beans, potatoes, turnips, cabbages, onions, parsnips, carrots, beets, currants, gooseberries, strawberries, apples, peaches, pears, or *fat and healthy babies*, in the production of all of them *we ask no favors*.

"As to the general average of the thermometer in winter and summer, I am not able to say, from the fact that I never kept a register, or consulted that of others; but the weather is very temperate, alike in summer and winter. Oregon City is in latitude almost 46° north, and yet the river did not approximate to freezing over last winter, though it was the coldest that had been for thirty years; and it is frequently the case that vegetables grow in the garden the entire winter. While in the summer one has very little need of thin clothes, never is he subject to those hot days which cause him to take refuge in the shade, or oppressed with those sultry nights which take away his sleep and sweat out his very life-blood. At nine

in the evening, in *mid-summer*, you may lie down to sleep, and there you may lie in the very arms of 'tired nature's sweet restorer,' without rolling or tumbling, nicely ensconced beneath a sheet and quilt, till seven the next morning. And when you awake you have no headache, no furred tongue and mouth, no bilious, aguey limbs, no heads beclouded in the mists of quinine, no sallow, ghastly countenances, and no *graveyard longings*, that are but too frequently experienced in the Western States. The health of that country alone, which no man has dared to deny, ought to be inducement enough to persons who consider life of any value to attract them to Oregon. As might be expected, the climate of Oregon is almost free from those sudden changes, from heat to cold, from the oppressive, still and sultry day, to the warring elements of a tempest-riven evening, and *vice versa*, which are so prevalent in the States. Wherever there is a sultry, impure, and pent-up atmosphere, there are thunder storms, tempests, tornados. With these we are rarely visited. This of itself is evidence of the purity of our atmosphere, and consequently of the healthfulness of our climate.

"We have two seasons, the wet and dry. The length of each is variable, the same as the summers and winters in the States. You have your cold, and long, temperate, and short winters; ours also vary in the same way. We usually have a sprinkling of snow, varying in quantity and duration in different years; our rains also vary in the same way. In the fall we have an introduction of rain the last of September or first of October, after which it clears off and continues fair for a time, varying from four to six weeks, when the winter or rainy season sets in. But it must not be supposed that it rains all the time from that to spring, for, upon consulting a journal of the weather, it will be found that a very respect-

able proportion of the wet season is made up of fair days—days which are cloudy and do not rain at all, and days part clear and part cloudy, and days all the time cloudy, but during which it does not rain *to hurt*. This explains the true state of the weather. For two or three days it may rain steadily and hard, the streams rising high; then it will slack away, and continue for a week or more clear, cloudy, and drizzling, in turn, during which time our people attend to their business out of doors, plough, build fences, &c., without any inconvenience; and while doing it, it is not necessary to have our fringed mittens, buffalo robes, or our ears tied up. It is warm and mild, and we work with healthy sinews and with pleasure, the song or whistle cheering on the ploughman or axeman, as, *barehanded*, and in his shirt sleeves *in dead of winter*, he pursues his pleasant labors. In March the rains begin to slack away, the fair weather increases, and showers continue into April, and sometimes to May. But the rainy season may be said to close up in March. Our summer season after the showers entirely cease, is made up of continued sunshine and star-bestudded and moonlight nights, for clouds rarely venture to our skies in the summer season. All concede that an Oregon summer is unrivalled for pleasantness and beauty.

Oregon is an extraordinarily healthy country, but aside from that, she holds out as many inducements for professional men, of all classes, as any other new country, with this addition, that pay is higher and more prompt than in any other, with perhaps the exception of California."

Mr. Thurston had some experience of the climate of California also, and remarks that, "to live there one would need first to have been acclimated in Pandemonium." This is strong language, but what other can describe a climate which

combines the worst features both of the torrid and frigid zones.

I shall make no apology to the reader, for the continuation of these interesting and valuable quotations, as follows:

"I am asked whether coal, and what kinds, have been discovered in Oregon. I reply that *coal* has been discovered there in various places and in large quantities, but there is a dispute as to its kind and quality. Not aware that the subject has been settled scientifically, I am unable to give the information to the extent desired. That there will be coal of the best quality, both anthracite and bituminous, found there, there cannot be any doubt, when the country shall be properly surveyed. Certain it is that coal in abundance of some kind has already been discovered.

"I have been informed that there is iron ore found in different parts and in quantities. I have seen specimens found there, judged to contain seventy-five per cent. of iron by persons acquainted with the business. But the existence of iron ore, and its extent, have as yet attracted but little attention, as there are no furnaces of any kind in the country, or anything attempted by way of working it.

"There is a fine opening for mechanics of all kinds. Up to this time there never has been a regular wagon shop in the country, though there are wheelwrights in the country who repair wagons occasionally. The reason for this is, that so many wagons have been taken thither from the States that there have been no calls for building. There is good oak and other timber in the country, and that business will become good at some future period. A carriage shop for the manufacture of light wagons and horse carriages would find employ now.

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An inquiry has also been made whether there is hemlock in the country. This species of tree does not grow generally all over the country, but is confined to localities, but where it does grow it is of a gigantic order, to which your hemlocks might look with propriety and call them *father*. Yes, the heads of your tallest hemlocks might hide themselves under the lower limbs of those of Oregon. The chief growth of the country is what we call fir, a species of the pine. There are three kinds of it, the white, yellow, and red fir. There is white pine in abundance, but it is also confined to certain localities. On the Blue Mountains pine grows to a perfection and magnitude that pines east of the Rocky Mountains never dared to aspire to, and that is the case with all the timber of the country—it is of a mammoth race. The black alder, that grows round the shores of the streams in New England and in the swamps, and rarely, if ever, entitled to the appellation of *tree*, is to be found in Oregon, in some instances, *three* feet in diameter. I have seen an *elder tree* in that country, (our common pith elder) so large that you could make four large rails out of the butt cut fifteen feet long, and such elders are not rare either."

I am also asked whether the people of Oregon have paid much attention to raising fruit. Although the amount of fruit raised in Oregon is quite limited, I think I may safely answer in the affirmative. Considering the time since Oregon first commenced to settle, and the amount of its inhabitants, I think it may be safely said that Oregon has the foundation laid for raising more fruit than any of our Western Territories, by far. Seeds of all kinds have been successively finding their way to the country, and all over the Territory are to be found nurseries, containing from ten to eighty and one hundred thousand trees, of apples, peaches, pears and plums.

CHAPTER XXXI.

View of Oregon Continued—Timber and Prairie Farms—Falls of the Cascades—Removal of the Indians—Final Disposition of the Soil—Oregon Plough—Industry and Enterprise of the People—Religious Privileges—Unity of the Union—Action Moves the World—Testimony of Capt. Crosby of the Safety of the Entrance to the Columbia River—Passes through the Cascade Mountains—National Pacific Railroad Convention.

Some sections of the country are all covered with timber, while there are others where prairie and timber are judiciously divided, and still others where the prairie largely predominates. However, good prairie farms, well supplied with timber, will be obtainable for a good while to come. The timbered portion of the country, though not so profitable to the settler at first, will unquestionably make the best farming country. A timber claim should be by no means slighted. It is a blushing shame, when our fathers have mowed down an empire of it, if we, their sons, can't do the same. A man going to a new country should not quail before dangers, nor shrink from grappling manfully with hardships. With shame be it said, however, that while our country owes its greatness to the spirit and energies of the *frontier men*, their wants and interests are the least looked after by the law-makers of the nation.

The falls of the Cascades, in the Columbia river, one hun-

dred and fifty miles from its mouth, are unquestionably an important point. Here that great river finds its way, as by a narrow defile, from middle Oregon through the Cascade range to the division lying west of those mountains. The fall here in the course of two miles, or a little more, is upwards of forty feet. I understand that a water power here may be made available to almost any extent. Our middle Oregon is destined to become thickly settled, consequently there will be a large commerce down the Columbia. But at this point all articles of transportation, each way, must be transshipped, and carried round these falls by a road of some kind. Vessels coming into the mouth of the Columbia river can run directly up to these falls without any obstruction. At this place, then, must be the grand depôt for all articles of commerce destined to middle Oregon, by way of the Columbia, and of all articles bound down. Besides, there is plenty of good timber for lumbering, and the grain of the upper country might come here to mill.

Alluding to the falls of the Cascades as a site for an engine and machine-shop, he says:

"From this on, the Pacific Ocean will teem with ocean steamers, and steamers navigating the rivers of the western world—all will want—must have engines, and where could there be a better place to build them than where the vessel could be brought to the spot to receive them?

"All believe here will be a town of much importance."

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"At the present time, whenever a man comes into the Territory, he lays himself off 640 acres of land, conforming as near as may be to the cardinal points of the compass. His claim to it is respected, provided he lives upon it, or makes permanent and lasting improvements thereon. And this will

continue to be the course pursued till such time as Congress shall make a disposition of the lands there. The Committee on Indian Affairs in the Senate have the subject of extinguishing the Indian title to lands in Oregon before them, and have promised me to report a bill soon for the extinguishment of their title to all of that part of Oregon lying west of the Cascade Mountains, and for the removal of the Indians east of those Mountains. I am in hopes it will pass Congress in the course of this month. If so, we shall get rid of the Indians in the course of next summer, and all the country at present and for some time to come, needed for settlement, will be thrown open to the immigrant, and thus the first pre-requisite step will have been taken preparatory to the final disposition of the soil.

"Perhaps I ought not to say what part of the country I would prefer to settle in. I might be accused of partiality. But I will say that any of it west of the Cascades is good enough, and one can hardly go amiss of good farming lands. When you arrive in the country it would be well for you to take a look over some of it before you settle—at least look till you fill your taste, and there locate. Do not be in too much of a hurry to buy when you first get through; a sharper may take you in. For immediate farming purposes, perhaps the Willamette Valley is at present most available. The Umpqua Valley is just beginning to settle, and perhaps if a man wanted to undergo a little extra privation, for an equivalent compensation, a *quid pro quo*, by way of most valuable claims, water-powers, or town sites, that valley should be duly considered. If a man wants a timber claim, and be near a good market, Astoria or its confines should be considered. North of the Columbia river, in the region of Puget's Sound, I believe to be a very important section of the country. There are some

of the best harbors in the world, and there are many and strong reasons why there should be a great and powerful city by-and-by in this region.

"One cannot look for business in Oregon now, if he has any gumption. The great bulk of the population of Oregon is confined to the Willamette Valley. Clatsop County, at the mouth of the Columbia, and south of it, contains quite a settlement. Astoria is in this county. North of the river is Lewis County, named after the explorer and fellow traveller of Clarke. This County has quite a settlement; Nesqually is in this County. Vancouver County, probably called Clarke now, in respect to Clarke, just alluded to, also lies north of the Columbia river. It was formerly called Clarke County, but at a time when British sway was in its palmy days in Oregon the county was changed from Clarke to Vancouver, in honor of the celebrated navigator, and no less celebrated slanderer of our Government and people. Now that American influence rules in Oregon, it is due to the hardy, wayworn American explorer to *re-alter* the name of this county, and grace it *again* with the name of him whose history is interwoven with that of Oregon. So our Legislature thought, and so, I have no doubt, they spoke and acted at their recent session. On the West side of the Willamette river are the counties of Washington, (formerly Tualitin,) Yam Hill, Polk, and Benton, in the order I have named them, going south. On the east side of the same river, going the same direction, are Clackamas, Champoeg, and Linn Counties. The principal towns of Washington County are Portland, the head of ship navigation on the Willamette, and Linn City, at the Falls of the Willamette river. Oregon City is in Clackamas County, and the largest place in the Territory. Fort Vancouver is in Vancouver County, on the Columbia, some eight or ten miles

above the junction of the Willamette with the Columbia. In Champoeg County there are the towns of Champoeg and Salem. At Salem is located the Methodist Institute. This town occupies one of the handsomest sites in Oregon, and is destined to be the central point of learning and of the *elité* of Oregon. The falls of the Yam Hill is another town site, and no mean one either. There is a most splendid water-power here, and it is being brought into requisition by two of our enterprising citizens, Messrs. Perkins and Haun. The Yam Hill is navigable, with proper improvements, from the Willamette to the Falls. This will become an important place. There are other places, both on the Columbia and Willamette and other rivers, where, in after years, will spring up towns and cities. I should not forget to say, however, if a man wishes to establish himself in business of any kind, Linn City offers as good inducements and as many of them, as any place in the Territory.

" The expense of going to Oregon by water, at the present time, is quite heavy. One can go by water quicker, but I have no hesitancy in saying that all persons from the northwest had better go over land. Many men want to go, but are short of means. To such let me say, Be of good cheer. Bring all your guns to bear and reach Oregon, if it takes the last cent; for, if you land there without staff or scrip, and having but one coat, or *none at all*, you have nothing to fear. Money is plenty, the highest wages is paid for men's and women's labor, and we have a generous and free people, who know how to sympathize with another's woes, toils, and hardships. They will take you by the hand and help you, for as yet humanity has not come to need glasses there, nor the heart shut to the necessities of a brother. Aristocracy finds there a poor dwell-

ing-place, and a republican equality is the presiding genius of the land."

In advice to emigrants, the following noble passage occurs:

"Select a *persevering*, *energetic man* for your camp-master, and let him regulate the drives and give the orders when and how to move and when to stop, and make it an individual and standing rule never to find fault, never to fret, never to swear, never to quarrel with any one, and particularly *never whip your ox under any circumstances*. If any four-footed animal has got a soul, it is an ox; and, although he may be fractious, if you beat him you will find his courage fail; he will pine away and give out by the way. And then, when you see his eyes talking *eloquently*, uttering the very thoughts of his soul apparently, if you have beaten him, your conscience, if you have got any, will lash you to agony. I have been over the ground. I had one of the *ugliest* oxen ever yoked; I beat him—I lost him; and when he at last *tumbled down*, because he *could stand no longer*, and turned his head, looking me full in the eye, as his eyes uttered *very agony itself*, I turned away with my conscience trebly smitten, and I repented from my inmost heart that I had beaten him. Let me repeat, *under no circumstances beat your ox*. You will find, before you get through, that you have insensibly become attached to him. When you have witnessed his great endurance, traveling on, day after day, and every day, for four or five months, tiring down and leaving by the way-side horses, and mules, and dogs, and even man himself, you will be impressed with his patience and capacity to labor beyond what you ever were before; and when you reflect that he has borne you and yours, and upon him, for long hundreds of miles, the life of yourself, of your wife, and of your little ones has been staked upon that of his, and upon his patient labors, if you do not love him, you will look

graciously upon him, you will pat his sides often, and involuntarily you will feel the incense of gratitude rising to him from the very altar of your heart."

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"Sixteen hundred weight is a plenty for five yokes of oxen, including provisions. With this load and five yokes of oxen one can travel along without difficulty. Great care should be taken in selecting a team. The oxen should be selected for their good temper, hardiness, and nimbly-traveling qualities. Your wheel-oxen should be hardy, powerful, and quick; while your leaders should be obedient to the *least word*, and as quick as thought, and all the team should be well broke before starting. Still, with such wheel and lead oxen as I have indicated, one is tolerably safe. Your oxen will fetch double in Oregon what they cost here. Every man should take an assortment of the best American cows, and at least two American mares of the finest blood. Cows, last summer, were worth fifty dollars ahead, while such mares as are indicated were worth three hundred dollars. There should be two good men to each wagon."

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"The plow which is mostly used, is made in the country, each mechanic making his appropriate part. The blacksmith makes the irons of a very large pattern, and the mechanic stocks it, making the wood part large and strong. The beam is stocked into the axletree of two wheels, and so arranged that the plow *may* tend itself, as the oxen next to the plow go on the tongue. Much more prairie may be turned in a day with such a plow, than by the ordinary cast-iron breaking-up plow. They turn a much wider furrow."

In alluding to the agricultural region on Clatsop Plains, he asserts that, although the larger portion of the male population

have been to the mines of California, there was produce enough raised and *harvested*, in the summer of 1849, to feed the population during the coming year. The wheat fields averaged from five to fifty acres each, which would yield an average of twenty-five or thirty bushels to the acre. Flour sold steadily at fourteen dollars per barrel, at which price *one field* of fifty acres of wheat produced its owner *thirty-five hundred* dollars.

The lamented Whitman succeeded so well in teaching the Cayuses, Nez-Percees, Spokans and other Indians, the art of agriculture, that they became adebts in raising corn, potatoes, wheat and barley; and in the breeding of cows, oxen, horses and hogs. The report of the officers of the Exploring Expedition describe the wheat raised there as *seven* feet high in the stalk, and the corn *nine* feet.

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"As to the extent of the valleys and magnitude of the rivers, south of the Willamette, I cannot speak from personal observation. It is understood that the Umpqua is two-thirds as large as the Willamette Valley, and as a grazing or grain-growing country, better. The valleys south of that have never been explored to any considerable extent. A company located themselves in the Rimpqua last fall and summer, and that valley may be expected to rapidly fill up hereafter. The harbor at the mouth of the Rimpqua is accessible for vessels of ten and twelve feet draught; and it is said that other harbors have been discovered south of the Columbia; and these things will be developed in due time."

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"In the four months succeeding the first of last May, thirty-seven vessels entered and departed the Columbia river, with a tonnage of nearly ten thousand tons. Messrs. Howland

& Aspinwall are soon to commence running their steamers to Astoria and Nesqually, in Oregon. Besides this, our own citizens are to have a sea-steamer of eight hundred tons, to run semi-monthly between San Francisco and the above-named ports, and Portland on the Willamette river. These lines of steamers will continue constantly hereafter. All, then, which remains to be done to make Oregon a *giant* in commerce, is for people to flock thither, and engage in the various avocations promotive of commerce. Messrs. Howland & Aspinwall, and Heart & Coffin, and even citizens, are to embark in the ice trade. This carried on all along the whole Pacific coast, and to the Sandwich Islands, will add not a little to enlarge our commercial business."

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"There is much good sense in the adage that 'where there is a *will*, there is a way.' Yes, to will, is to do! And there is no class of people who need so much of this mental giant, this moral Hercules, as does the hardy, warring, laboring, contending emigrant. To this class of people the country owes her greatness."

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"A more industrious, more enterprising, active and thrifty people, as a body, cannot be found within the whole compass of the States, than are to be found in Oregon. For their steady habits, high moral tone, general intelligence, courage and hardihood, love of liberty and of our republican institutions, as well as for their constant and ardent devotion to the Republic, and the *unity* of the Union, they will proudly compare with a like number, taken as they come, in any section of our country whatever."

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"There is no credit there and no need of any. If a man

wants, all he has got to do is to work—that is right, for it is said, and said rightly, that he who will not work shall not eat—he ought not. I deny the right of any man, although he be as rich as Crœsus, to spend his time in loafing. I mean moral right, growing out of his duties to man and to God, and not that right which is more properly a *permission* of the civil law."

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"A more healthy state of morals cannot be found in any State of this Union. This is a feature of the history of Oregon of which she has just reason to be proud. It has now been ten years since the country began to settle, during which time the country has been without a jail, or any use for one. Moral sentiment, with her angelic sceptre, has ruled that people for a long ten years. And so strong has this sentiment been, that without jails, or any of the parapharnalia of terror, and with a feeble government, or no government at all, property of all kinds, during *all that time*, has been as safe as in the best-regulated communities of the *best* of the States. We hope this will continue to be so."

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In reply to an inquiry as to religious privileges in Oregon, Mr. Thurston says:

"I suppose you have faith in Christianity, in the magic power of evangelical religion, rightly inculcated, to elevate and ennoble mankind—you certainly bow with reverence before that touch-stone of human rights and moral duties, that Text Book of all Democratic Republican Institutions—the New Testament—the foundation stone and cap stone, too, of our country's greatness and glory! I deem religion, rightly understood and practised upon, a sure bulwark against all tyranny and oppression—the anchor, both sure and steadfast, attached to which the ship of

state may bid defiance to the most fierce of tempests, nay, the very *Water of Life* that will prolong its existence, and prevent our country from growing old, and being prematurely interred in the Charnel-house of Nations. But to leave this eulogium on what needs no praise of mine, I would inform you that we have churches and preachers, and meetings and denominations. We have the Methodists, the traveling-companion of the back-woodsman, the Baptists, of both kinds, Presbyterians, Old School and New, Christians, or Campbellites, and Catholics. There are no Episcopalians or Universalists that I know of, I mean in an organized form. In a word, we are a church-going people, and I hope we shall be more so. There is a beautiful fitness in the services of the Sabbath—a sociality—begetting something that I cannot explain. What man can enter the church on Sunday, with right motives, that does not come out feeling that he is a better man? As he enters it, his soul may be disturbed, the whole surface of his mind may be convulsed with surf-breaking billows, pushed on by the fierce winds of contention, but as he hears the gentle words 'our Father who art in Heaven,' falling from the Minister of God, and feels the soothing, melting strains of the choir moving the chords of his heart, and then listens to the simple but pathetic tale of the life, sufferings and death of the Saviour, and what it was for, one by one those billows lessen, die away, disappear—the winds which tossed them quietly retreat to their caverns, and the before tumbling, angry, wave-combing sea of his mind puts on a silvery, placid surface, on which the birds of Paradise sport and are glad."

He remarks in another connection, but which will be equally appropriate here:

"Let each of us teach our children this doctrine, and that the unity of this nation is too holy to be shattered or dissolved

by personal or sectional considerations, or all of them combined, and all will be well. If this spirit prevails hereafter to the extent that it should in this country, the millenium of liberty is sure to come; the monarchies and thrones of the old world will be shaken down, *Carthage will be destroyed*, an end put to Punic faith, the ploughshare of republicanism will upturn the very sites of monarchy and aristocracy, and they will become fields where humanity and equal rights shall be cultivated and matured."

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"You say 'there are hundreds of individuals and families in the States who would make the most enterprising and useful citizens, if in Oregon, but they lack the means for getting there.' I was aware of the fact before. If our government could be made aware of it too, and *rightly* to view the matter, something might be done to build up the country and coast. But a deaf ear is hereditary with the family of nations. The voice of the toil-worn emigrant, and the groans of the frontier-man, are the last to be responded to. Knowing this, and relying upon himself, the emigrant, with his axe and spade in hand, has fought his way across the continent, breasting and cutting down in turn the forests and the savages of the country, and now standing on the westernmost range of terra firma, he looks over across the sea, and with the trumpet of his nation's history, he proclaims to the Sandwich Islands that their King cometh, riding upon the swift charger of civilization. Tell those hundred men, sir, and those hundred families, to rise in their own strength, and with *iron will*, *decree* that the journey *shall be made*. When once there, nothing is to be feared. Although they may land there with nature's apparel *only*, they can, with industry, soon put on another. Soon they can have abundance, and what is no small item, they will be where the

mind has not come to believe that the size of *the man* is measured by the weight of his purse."

Mr. Thurston also states that Oregon has one of the best school laws to be found anywhere in the United States, and that there is a tax on the property in the Territory for the support of common schools.

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"In concluding this letter, gentlemen, I must ask you to make some allowance for its many imperfections, by reason of the haste with which I have written it. It goes to the printer in its primal manuscript, without alteration or amendment. To its want of order and systematic arrangement you will please bestow the apology that I looked into your letters and wrote as the order of your many questions seemed to direct me. Besides, you will bear in mind that we who live in the backwoods, whose duty it is to grapple with roughness, are not expected, either in the choice of language, purity of diction, or order of arrangement, to vie with the best models of literary circles, or the Glaucuses of the learned world. But *we* can think, and thinking, *act*, and *action moves the world*. I hope, gentlemen, to meet you, and *all your neighbors* in Oregon, where, co-operating in that genial clime, on that fertile soil, and at the base of that placid ocean, we may lay the foundation of *another sister*, not to be outshone for beauty, intelligence, or worth by either of that sparkling galaxy that now constitutes the sisterhood of *the republic*."

The only regret which I have experienced, connected with my late voyage to and from the Pacific coast, is, that I did not visit Oregon. Mr. Thurston's description is not more favorable than that which I received from a great many of her citizens, whom I met in California. The noble and elevated sentiments quoted from the former, are worthy of the big

heart and expanded liberality of mind created by an intimate association with Nature, where she exists in her primeval grandeur and magnificence.

In closing this sketch of Oregon, its superior inducements to all that El Dorado can offer, for those who seek a *home* on the Pacific, are clearly manifest; and it is equally plain that, it must one day be to the Pacific States, what New England is to the Atlantic. From this time forth it will afford far more *certain*, and therefore superior opportunities, for the acquisition of wealth, than California. Laborers in the field receive there six dollars, and good mechanics ten to sixteen dollars per day. No country in the world furnishes better or more abundant materials for ship-building. Her ports must be the home of the American whalemen in the Pacific, which can obtain supplies there better than anywhere else on the coast.

Facts already quoted establish the safety of the navigation of the Columbia River. Mr. Thurston also states that "Capt. Roberts *beat in* over that bar *against wind and tide*, while I was at the mouth of the river;" and, that the two vessels which have struck or been lost there this year, met their fate through carelessness in allowing them to get far out of the channel. Capt. Wilkes' chart of the Columbia shows a channel over the bar three quarters of a mile wide. The latest Pacific mail, also, brought the intelligence of the discovery of a southern entrance, said to be superior in all respects to the one heretofore navigated.

A remarkable confirmation of the safety of the navigation at the mouth of the Columbia, as well as of the ignorance heretofore too generally prevalent on the subject, is contained in the following statement of Capt. Nathaniel Crosby, jr., in answer to inquiries by Hon. S. R. Thurston:

"During the last four years, I have been sailing (most of the time master of different vessels) from Oregon to Sandwich Islands and California, have acted as pilot of vessels owned or chartered by myself—have crossed the bar of Columbia River *thirty-five times*, and in each month of the year. My first voyage I was detained forty-five days in Baker's Bay, for a chance (as I then thought) to get to sea. I now believe there was not three days at one time that I might not have gone out, and should have gone, had I been alone. But one of the Hudson Bay Co. ships was there, and the captain said he thought it unsafe to go; being a stranger, I believed him for a time, until, discouraged by delay, I set about surveying the channel, set off currents, &c., then came out ahead, much against the oillwf the Hudson Bay Co.'s captain. Since then, I have gone out and come in under almost all circumstances. I have beat out and come in, tack for tack, with the wind dead ahead. I have come in at midnight, and in thick, foggy weather, and never found less than *five fathoms* water on the bar ot the Columbia. * * * I believe the Columbia as easy of access as the harbor of New York.

"After crossing the bar, it is one of the most easy rivers to navigate; it affords a good beating channel, with not less than *three fathoms* water, as far up as the mouth of the Willamette; and the latter river never has less than *twelve feet* water. * * * * *

"If the channels of the above rivers were regularly surveyed and buoyed out, with the advantage of good and experienced pilots, I believe them to be the best rivers for navigation I have ever seen, up to Portland, (a distance of 120 miles,) the lower of the principal settlements in the Territory, and the head of *ship* navigation.

I have no doubt, from the increase of trade and the situa-

tion of the country, that these rivers will, before the expiration of many years, be fairly known; and steamers being of great advantage in towing in and out vessels during calms and contrary winds, enterprise and trade will be set upon as fair a footing here as in any part of the world."

The Great Pacific Railroad project of Asa Whitney, Esq., is now arousing the attention of the entire nation to its importance, and forcing a conviction upon the public mind, both of its complete feasibility and absolute necessity. These points once conclusively determined by the American people, a railroad, or, as some think, a great military road, will immediately be commenced, its final completion being only a question of time. Mr. Whitney has kindly furnished me with the details of his great plan, and although they are too voluminous for discussion here, I may be permitted to remark that, the more they are studied and examined, the more do they ensure confidence and grow with conviction into the mind.

This great *original project*, (beside which all succeeding ones are not only imitations in fact, but abortions in intellectual conception) contemplates a continuous railroad from Lat. 43° N. on Lake Michigan, by the North Pass of the Rocky Mountains in Lat. 45° N., two-thirds of the way to the Pacific: or by the South Pass in Lat. 42° N., half the distance to the same terminus at Puget's Sound, in about 47° N. Latitude. From either Pass which may be finally adopted, it branches for a terminus to San Francisco, crossing the Columbia River towards its mouth. But the great terminus contemplated is at Puget's Sound; which all accounts agree, is the safest and best harbor on the whole Pacific coast.

In regard to the different passes in Oregon and through the Cascade Mountains, Mr. Thurston states that there is a good wagon road from the Grand Ronde to the Dalles, over which he

drove five yoke of oxen, with a wagon load of 2000 lbs. without accident; that over Barlow's Road, through the Cascade Mountains, and along the foot of Mount Hood, one thousand wagons similarly laden have passed with the same success; that there is another road far south of the latter, and still another south of all, leading through the celebrated cañon, besides a road from Nesqually to Walla Walla. He also asserts that Puget's Sound is the best harbor on the Pacific for the terminus of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad; and further, that Capt. Wilkes assures him that, "there is no insurmountable barrier to a railroad from the Dalles down the Columbia, by the falls of the Cascades and thence to Puget's Sound," and this he declares, "is a fact well known to the people of Oregon.

Conventions have recently been held on the subject in St. Louis and Memphis, and the great National Pacific Railroad Convention assembles in Philadelphia during the present year. Meantime Asa Whitney (who has already earned for himself the name of founder of the greatest undertaking hereafter to be recorded in history,) is indefatigable in his efforts with the Government; and during the present inharmonious session of Congress, a Pacific Railroad Bill has been reported in the Senate, in accordance with his views. No man, who has a spark of the nobler kind of ambition in his soul, will fail to look beyond pecuniary and secondary considerations, and most heartily wish success and final triumph to Mr. Whitney, in this great enterprise. Even those who doubt its practicability may venture thus far in its aid.

Such of my readers as have borne with me patiently in these chapters of digression from the regular course of the narrative, will doubtless be quite willing now to resume the narrative of *Scenes by the Way*.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Farewell to California—Monterey—Santa Barbara—Ship on Fire—San Diego—Gulf of California—West Coast of Mexico—A Day at Mazatlan—Beauty of the Harbor and Town—Ramblings and Incidents.

THE norwest gale was in full blast at noon of the *first of May*, and the streets of San Francisco filled with driving sand, as wrapped in thick shawls, or muffled in cloaks and heavy pilot coats, the homeward bound passengers took their way to the place of embarkation. We thought of moving-day in New York, and there was much around to remind us of that occasion, always excepting the weather, which was colder and more disagreeable than the March and November gales at home. The evening preceding our departure, our host, Mr. Merrill, insisted upon bidding us adieu in a glass of sparkling champagne, provided by his hospitality; and I then experienced the regret of parting from very many recent but kind and esteemed friends and acquaintances.

Mingling in California, and on my way there, with large numbers of my countrymen from all parts of the Union, I should fail to do justice to my own feelings, did I not avail myself of this opportunity to acknowledge my appreciation of the friends thus acquired. Many of these would also have returned at that period had their engagements permitted.

Some have already followed; and it is not unreasonable to conclude, that a similar distaste for the life and habits necessarily prevalent in such a confused state of society, will induce others, and especially heads of families, to return to the regular occupations to which they have been heretofore accustomed at home.

In company with ninety other passengers, among whom were some successful miners, as well as others, returning like ourselves, disappointed with the country, we slowly threaded our way in the steamship "California" out of the crowd of vessels at the anchorage.

This ship was the first American steamer which doubled Cape Horn into the Pacific; and Capt. Cleveland Forbes had the honor of being the pioneer in this great enterprise. Deserted at San Francisco by all her officers and crew, Captain Forbes and a young engineer named James De Kay alone had the moral firmness to adhere to their duty and engagements, under temptation the nature of which only those on the spot can comprehend, and which very few men were able to resist.

This ship had thus been detained for want of men and coal during a period of two months; but sailors returned from the mines were now abundant, and anxious to ship—some for one voyage, until the waters were lower in the mines, and others to quit the country, or to resume their sea-faring life.

We had also on board at least half a million of dollars in gold dust, belonging to several miners, or consigned to owners of merchandise—some disposed of at a profit, but much at considerable loss; and, doubtless, large quantities of gold are yet to come forward under similar circumstances.

Our voyage was to be enlivened by the presence of several ladies, among whom were the wives of distinguished officers of the army, and others, who had accompanied their husbands

to El Dorado in the first voyage of this steamer. The Sandwich Islands were also ably represented in the presence of two American ladies from Honolulu; and our decks being clear for promenading or amusement, we had a pleasant prospect before us.

Anchoring for a few hours in Saucelito Bay, we laid in full supplies of good water; and at midnight passed through the narrows into the Pacific, watching the fast-receding forms of the Farallones, with no small degree of pleasure. "*Below*," was then the cry, and all turned in—some to brood over scenes of parting—some to toss in restless anxiety about the safe transmission of their gold dust across the Isthmus; and others to wonder which caused the most trouble and unhappiness in the world, the possession of gold or the lack of it.

The following morning we hove in sight of Point Piños, and entered the bight of Monterey. The town, by daylight, more than confirmed our impressions of it by night; and its cluster of *adobe* and tiled-roof houses, many of which appeared large and commodious, together with the fort and government buildings, with the pine-covered hills in the back-ground, presented a very pleasant view. The Stars and Stripes were flying over the government house, where Brigadier-General Riley had just assumed his duties as civil governor of the territory, Major-General Persifer F. Smith being military commander-in-chief.

Receiving on board one other passenger, we proceeded down the coast to Santa Barbara, arriving there on the morning of the second day after. Approaching that port, we observed some miles off shore the sea covered with an oily substance, and the air impregnated with the odor of bitumen, or mineral tar, numerous deposits of which abound along the coast there, and in the vicinity of Pueblo de los Angelos.

We also had a fine view of the St. Ynes, or Santa Barbara Mountain, where Fremont's battalion crossed in the stormy Christmas night of 1846, suffering great hardship and losing a large number of horses. A good road, suitable for the trasportation of cannon, is said to be near at hand, avoiding this mountain entirely.

The town of Santa Barbara lies at the terminus of a level and beautiful plain, which extends to the northward, behind the mountain, dotted with groves of trees, presenting a picturesque scene. The houses are of the same description as those of Monterey, but present a newer and more regular appearance, and contain about one thousand inhabitants.

A mile or two in the back-ground, and more elevated, stand the Mission buildings with the Cathedral towers rising in the midst. These are in good repair and are still occupied by the venerable *padres*. The anchorage is a mere open roadstead, and is unsafe for vessels during a gale.

Having been disappointed in obtaining supplies both here and at Monterey, we continued our voyage on San Francisco fare; consisting chiefly of rice, salt provisions, and preserved meats. South of Santa Barbara we passed through what is called the canal, formed by a series of pretty islands which lie some distance from the main land and create a smooth sea.

On Sunday we were off Point Conversion and Point Concepcion, with fine weather but rough sea, which usually prevails off the latter point, called the Hatteras of this coast.

At eleven o'clock the following night, after being disturbed a long time by what we supposed was the smoke of the lamps in the state rooms of our neighbors, the engine was suddenly stopped; the ship being on fire from the heating of the journal, a part of the machinery, from which the regular supply of oil had been withheld by the choking of the ducts. The

hose was instantly rigged, but as the fire was not threatening, it was extinguished, and the journal cooled in the course of an hour, by the use of buckets only. While any uncertainty existed, there was some alarm on the part of the ladies; and the idea of a ship on fire, at sea, is a sort of conviction that what is to be will be, and cannot be avoided. In the present instance, although we were not over thirty miles from the land, the timely discovery and mastery of the fire created a new debt of gratitude to a kind Providence, perhaps felt if not acknowledged by all.

Next day we ran into the pretty little bay of San Diego, where we found a transport at anchor, and some United States troops just landed; no doubt to help work Uncle Sam's mines on their own hook, as soon as they could obtain a chance for desertion. Here again we were disappointed in the wished-for supplies; all the male population of California being engaged in trading or digging for gold.

Continuing our voyage, we hove in sight one evening of Cape San Lucas, and doubling it, gladly bade adieu to the desolate-looking coast of Lower California, shaping our course with delightful weather and smooth sea, across the Gulf of California, towards the west coast of Mexico.

At sunset, we beheld its towering mountain peaks looming in the distance, and laying off during the night, entered the port of Mazatlan at daylight.

Approaching from the seaward, the harbor and city of Mazatlan afford a superb view. Immense island rocks, three or four on each side of the harbor, present their bold cliffs to the sea, standing like sentinels from the main, one before the other. The largest of these on the northern side is called the Creston, and is a conspicuous landmark to vessels in making the port. Between these rocks the sea rolls in, forming a

white line of breakers in the southern or old harbor, but leaving a safe anchorage and good entrance to the port, except during the prevalence of the southeast gales, when it is the most dangerous harbor in the Pacific, resembling Valparaiso in this respect. Close upon the bay and shut in by low, but desolate-looking hills, above which high mountains are seen in the distance, lies the beautiful and bright-looking city of Mazatlan.

Accepting the polite invitation of the captain of the port, who is a Swedish gentleman, we were soon alongside of the mole in his boat, and prepared to spend a day in Mazatlan. Entering the town, we were delighted with its rows of pretty and neat-looking houses; built in the Mexican style, with flat roofs, the wall covered with a coat of dazzling white, or with peach blossom, stone and straw colors, and many of them having highly ornamented iron balconies on the second story. The streets were clean, generally of a uniform, moderate width, and provided with substantial stone sidewalks. This is the principal commercial port in Mexico, and the signs all around us of a thriving trade were unmistakeable. It is difficult to make correct estimates of population, but I venture the supposition that there are ten thousand inhabitants in Mazatlan. The town itself presents a new and renovated appearance. Houses and warehouses were being built or repaired, and the long lines of the principal streets are filled with shops and warehouses of every kind. Many of these we visited, and found them well stocked with merchandise from America, Europe and China. A neatness, both with regard to their houses, shops and persons, prevailed here, which we did not meet with elsewhere, among either Mexicans or New Grenadians.

We found also many of our countrymen, who had crossed

Mexico on their way to California. All were eager for news from the gold region; and while mingling together with the utmost hilarity and good feeling, we were greatly amused by their perplexity, and the contrariety of our own reports.

One of our passengers, who had made $50,000 as proprietor of *monté* banks, represented California as the Paradise of money seekers; others, who from professional duties or other causes had never visited the *mines* or the *interior*, thought gold abundant and easily obtained, and the country a second Italy: while the contrary views of those who had resided long in California, or visited and worked in the mines, were received with little credence and less interest. Some of these poor fellows, who had exhausted all their means in reaching Mazatlan, were anxious to go on board the steamer in any capacity, and thus we pass over another leaf of the future history of the rush to California.

Resuming our peregrinations about the town, we came to a kind of natural quay, north of the principal bay. Here are several stately houses, with large open courts in the centre, provided with cocoa and orange trees, with occasionally a fountain. The first stories are used as counting houses, while above these are the residences of the families. Looking through the doors opening upon the balconies, we saw some of the walls, adorned with oil paintings, and ceilings painted in fresco with the most exquisite designs. At the foot of the quay, the waters of the gulf and of the Pacific came thundering in with combined force, and during the southeast gales are said to present a magnificent and terrific spectacle in the harbor, then deserted by everything that floats. The breeeze here, we found most refreshing, and the climate is said to be very fine and salubrious, except during the season of greatest heat, when it is enervating.

At dinner we enjoyed some specimens of Mexican and Chinese cookery, as the Canton Café was kept by Chinamen, who were real celestials. A Mexican funeral also came off, at which there was a most extensive display of fire crackers and rockets, for what reason we cannot conceive, unless to shoot the little devils flying about after the soul of the Don.

The hour for embarking having arrived, we bid *adios* to Mazatlan with many agreeable impressions, and hastened to the mole. Here were seated three Mexican soldiers, in all their peacock splendor. Giving us the wink, one of our party handed a black bottle half filled with cocoanut oil to a soldier. Seizing with avidity the supposed cogniac, he gulped it down ; but quickly passed it to his comrade, and all three were in a moment engaged in untying the twist of their lips on the cuffs of their fine uniforms, amidst our uproarious laughter.

Shortly, we were under full headway, passing out of the harbor, beholding as our last objects of interest the beautiful British frigate Inconstant, smuggling specie, and the brigantine " Amelia," on board which murder and piracy had been committed a few weeks before, in the Pacific.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

San Blas—Plaza and Market—Mexicans and Mexican Horses—A Ride along the Beach—Sand Flies—An Irish Lass—Ruins of the Old Town—A Mexican Naval Hero—Scenes and Incidents—A Blue-light on the Ocean.

HAVING obtained abundant supplies, we sailed from Mazatlan, in high good humor, delighted with our day's sojourn, and reached San Blas, one hundred miles down the coast, the following morning. I had spent two days here during my voyage to California, and the description of the town and the occurrences of my visit are now given.

Descending by the falls of the rope, "hand over fist," as the sailors say, we obtained seats in the first boat, and were soon landed on the deep sand beach at the mouth of the river St. Jago. Here were piled in confusion all kinds of merchandise, some just landed from six or seven vessels in the harbor, and some awaiting shipment to San Francisco. Wending our way through the deep sand, our attention was attracted by an enormous tropical tree, its extended branches and foliage spreading out over a space some two hundred feet in circumference, and supported by a trunk of proportionate magnitude. The name given to it by the natives was *manzanillo*, or something similar.

Crossing a rude wooden bridge thrown over a little inlet or

creek, we entered the town, consisting of some three or four hundred *adobe* and palmetto-roofed houses, rudely thatched, lining the narrow and irregular streets, which are composed of the same dry, hot sand. Passing many little shops and wine stores, we came to the *plaza*, where, under the shelter of a kind of booth, the market people were chaffering and cheating *los Yankees* with all their might. Fine oranges, limes, and bananas were to be had in abundance, and we mingled with the tawny, dirty crowd, till nightfall.

The lower class of Mexicans, on the west coast, appear to be a dark, Indian-looking race, with just enough of the Spanish blood—without its appropriate intelligence—to add a look of cunning to their gleaming, treacherous eyes. The men are tall and robust, but appear effeminate in their fancy *serapes*, under which they invariably conceal the ready and cowardly knife.

Seeing numerous *caballeros* riding about on their little Mexicans ponies or mustangs, I obtained one gaily caparisoned, and made for the sea shore. By dint of urging and whipping, (being unprovided with the indispensable spurs,) I got him down to the hard beach at the edge of the surf, which was roaring in fine style, and then giving rein, laid on the whip right and left, as hard as I could dash, for two or three miles. It was glorious excitement, with the fine breeze, the thunder of old Ocean and the tramping of the horse ringing to the accompaniment; beating the fashionable concerts all hollow, and enabling one to enjoy the breath of the salt spray, instead of the sickening odor of hair oil and cologne.

Wandering afterwards through the burning sand, which seemed like red-hot shot, we were incessantly annoyed with the bites of a minute little insect called *sand-flies*, which, during calm weather, or with the wind off shore, reached even

the ship, filling the state-rooms with their tormenting presence. To escape, in some measure, from these, and the midday sun, which induces the dangerous San Blas fever, we seated ourselves in the different shops and cafés.

Behind the counter of one of these, we noticed a large, broad-shouldered woman, with blue eyes, ruddy complexion, and black hair. From these indications, and the fear in which all seemed to regard the unceasing clatter of her tongue, we suspected her origin to be rather of the Hibernian than of the Celtic race, and accordingly addressed her in our own language. She quickly replied, "No hablar Ingles" (I do not speak English); but thinking to determine the question more satisfactorily, I said, "Sure, my darlint, and it 's from the green isle ye are, the swatest gem of the say;" at which she blushed scarlet, and dove to the other end of the shop, leaving all the notions and nicknacks to my care and consolation. Making no further inquiries, however, she soon returned, apparently not all displeased with the gallant allusion to her newly-discovered nationality.

Leaving some of my companions chaffering for cigars, kicking the dog, or teasing the señoras, I joined a squad of rovers, and strayed out of the town, through chaparal and underwood, to the top of a high bluff immediately upon the ocean, and about a mile from the present town. Here we found a deserted plaza, with the remains of a broken column standing in the centre, surrounded by the ruins of houses of the wealthy Spaniards, who were driven out of the country impoverished by the first revolution. On one side of this square, and upon the verge of the precipice, stands a very large and substantial stone edifice, formerly, no doubt, the legislative or municipal hall. Seeing a ladder at one end, we ascended to the roof, which is flat, solid masonry, of as-

tonishing strength and durability. The view from thence is truly magnificent. At the base of the precipice, towards the south-east, lies the broad ocean, with the miniature-looking vessels resting on its bosom, like sea-birds ready to spread their wings; while along the whole coast, and far inland, the high mountains extend into dim distance, presenting the outlines of extinct volcanoes among their giant forms. Clustered around the deserted plaza, the melancholy ruins relate to sighing wind or echoing foot-fall, their oft-told tale of ruined pride and desolation, while others partially repaired and occupied, tell of renovation and hope in the future for Mexico. Aside from these stands the old cathedral, not to be described by any architectural comparison I can muster, except that of a large barn with a tremendous big hen-coop at one end. Perched within, we descried the usual number of bells, which, in by-gone years, have predicted the story of the future, till it has come to be that of the past.

Indulging in these reflections, we dismounted from the roof, and reaching terra firma in safety, notwithstanding our flighty imaginations, looked around for some ingress to the apparently deserted building. While thus engaged, we were surprised by the sudden appearance of a gentleman who emerged through a ruined doorway, and informed us in a mixture of Spanish and English, that he was "El Commandante" of the Mexican Steamer, Guadalope, during the war. He then produced his uniform coat, and with true Mexican vanity and braggadocia, boasted that he had captured the United States Brig, Truxton. He looked somewhat crest-fallen, however, when reminded that she was high and dry upon the rocks at the time, and that, no doubt, he had sometimes captured *turtle* in the same way. The coat disappeared, the Mexican *vamosed*, and we "sloped" in aldermanic convulsions.

Descending the hill by another path, we found a huge wooden cross, bedecked with artificial flowers, and some natural ones, just placed there by the faithful. Over the cross on a brass plate, are the letters I.N.R.J., initials of the Latin inscription of Pilate; and the whole is protected from the weather by a roof.

Returning to the town we obtained a true Mexican dinner, consisting of jerked beef stewed with onions and plenty of cayenne pepper, which they call "*carne con chile colorado.*" This was accompanied by the everlasting *frijoles* or beans, and for desert delicious chocolate and *tortillas*. The Indian corn, for the latter luxury, we saw in process of preparation. Two young girls were busily engaged in pounding it between large, smooth stones. One of these *señoritas* was quite pretty, and as she gracefully bent forward in her useful employment, displayed a bust which Saratoga might envy, while the bright tinge upon her cheek deepened or grew faint in fitful gleams of roseate hue.

Strolling through the town as evening approached, we saw two Mexican gallants busily employed in preparing their guitars for a serenade. Their door stood invitingly open, and old recollections made their bachelor's hall too attractive to pass by unvisited; so we entered, and were entertained by the utmost politeness, partaking of a delicious beverage called "anis de la China fresco," made by steeping the small sweet glutinous seeds in water.

Thus terminate my recollections of San Blas, which, like those of many places we visited, were rendered agreeable as much by a determination to be pleased, as by other causes.

Before sailing from that port on our return voyage, a most ludicrous scene was enacted alongside. A small canoe, with two Mexicans, and a cargo of bananas and melons, approach-

ed the ship for traffic, and as there was quite a swell on, *el patron* led hold of the stairway over the side. In a moment the frail cockle-shell tipped over, and away went *peon* and *patron*, bananas and melons—the latter *water*-melons now beyond all question. Bobbing about among these, we soon saw the sculls of the *greasers;* and the empty, pomatumed pate of a Parisian dandy could not have floated more lightly in oil upon the troubled waters. Floundering ruefully thus amidst the wreck of their hopes, afraid of sharks below, and pounded above by the fandango among the melons, screeches and yells of fear and pain arose, such as only a horse or a *fireman* could imitate. The upshot of all was, that John Shark lost a lean dinner, and Jack Tar got sundry melons by coming to the rescue, while the poor *greasers* employed the rest of the day in fishing for their lost fruit.

Darkness rested upon the calm surface of the sea as we slowly glided from our anchorage; and the white foam had scarce gathered in our wake, to denote that our home was once more upon the deep, when the whole scene was suddenly illumined by a light as intense as if the queen of night had leaped into the waves from her throne in the sky. Distinct as at noonday, the bold white rocks in the harbor rose beyond our bows; while the tall masts of a large ship, her white sails motionless as the still air, lay off our quarter, with the meteor flag of England drooping at her mizen. Rushing now with accelerated speed full on our course, the starry banner flew to our peak, and waved a brief adieu, as we gave three hearty cheers in exchange for the bluff hurrahs and beautiful *blue-light* of our English sailor friends.

Now, kind reader, if you never saw a blue-light in a dark night upon the ocean, do not call this description high-flown;

and remember, too, that we had ladies on board, to rekindle imagination with their delighted exclamations.

We continued our voyage with lessened numbers, having landed several of our passengers at San Blas, to pursue their journey by the principal route across Mexico, through Tepic and Guadalaxara, to the capital. Among these was a merchant of that city, who had visited San Francisco with large means for investment in gold dust, at prices reported to prevail when he left home. He was accompanied by his friend, a young English gentleman, for many years a resident of Mexico, and who had been to the Stanislaus *diggings* to see the *elephant*, and who saw the veritable *Mastodon* himself. He proved himself, in our brief acquaintance, the best of friends, and never so happy as when afforded a chance to grumble at California and the gold region.

There was also a poor Mexicano landed at the same port, who had lost overboard seven pounds of gold dust, the result of his winnings in the mines; and now he could neither play *monté* or buy *aguardienté*.

Missing one of the crew the same night, there was a general hunt for him alow and aloft, fearing, as many did, that he had fallen overboard, or gone to the "halls of Montezumas;" but we found him at last, snugly stowed away in the capenter's room, in a state which did not augur well for his career in El Dorado. It was, however, quite an incident at sea; and as such duly announced by the corps of reporters at breakfast on the following morning.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Bay and Town of Acapulco—A Sunday on Shore—Incidents—Departure—A Stern Chase—Water in Exchange for Champagne—Short of Coals—Alarm of Mutiny—Court Martial and Ludicrous Scenes—Coast of Central America—Harbor of Realejo—Town and River of David—Coibo—Banna and Otoque—Decks for Fuel—End of Voyage.

After a pleasant run of two days and a half, still in sight of this bold coast, we arrived at Acapulco early on Sunday morning, 13th of May. To the northward of this bay, the mountains are much higher than other portions of the coast, and vessels can make the port with greater certainty by steering for them.

The Bay of Acapulco is, without exception, the finest harbor on the Pacific, and for security cannot be excelled by any in the world. The morning was clear and beautiful, with a gentle breeze from the ocean, as our ship entered the main channel to the southward of a little island, which seems as if cut off from the foot of the mountain to form another beautiful but smaller entrance to the bay. The principal one by which vessels usually enter and depart, we found to be some half a mile in width, and one mile in length, with the mountains rising two or three thousand feet on either hand. Gazing eagerly through this magnificent opening for a sight of the town, our eyes met only the tall mountains rising to the

clouds, with the yellow sand beach skirted by picturesque groves of cocoa trees at their base. Here, suddenly emerging into the bay which lies more to the north, we were in the midst of a fine circular basin, some miles in circumference, and completely land-locked, seeming like a deep tranquil lake in the midst of the mountains.

The town, with its pretty white *adobe* houses, lies close on the northeastern shore, and is protected by a fort on a bluff at the southern side, which commands the entrance to the harbor. As we anchored abreast of the town, the people gathered in groups under the large trees, or in front of their houses, all dressed in holiday attire, and the ship was instantly surrounded by canoes and craft of every description, filled with jabbering boatmen, or people anxious to get on board. Among these we were pleased to meet some of our countrymen whom we had left in Panama, and who had reached this port in their little schooner Constellation, on their way to San Francisco. In return for information highly interesting to them, they very politely took us ashore in their boat, and made us their guests for the day. As we landed astride the shoulders of a swarthy Mexican, the organ was pealing from door and window of a pretty little cathedral, a hundred yards from the shore ; and we found ourselves in the midst of an exceedingly quiet, neat, and orderly population. The town consists of several hundred houses, shops, and cafés, all of a dazzling white, with flat roofs, and generally clean and well-arranged in the interior. The streets are irregular and not wide, but are characterized by the same scrupulous nicety. We, of course, visited the market and the plaza, and found them filled with animated groups trading, gambling, cock-fighting, or lazily enjoying their existence in the sun—the señoras especially revelling in the fragrance of the *cigarritas*

held in their olive lips. Presently we heard the notes of a full military band playing "Hail Columbia," and other national airs, by request of some of our old California residents, who had long been strangers to these inspiring strains. Obtaining, after diligent inquiry, some beautiful shells gathered by the natives on the shores of the Pacific, we returned to our hospitable quarters, well pleased with our ramble, and enjoyed the luxury of a bath in most primitive style, behind a curtain in the court-yard. And **como no*, or *quien sabe*, as the fair *greaserita* said who filled the queer jar with the pure element.

The brief twilight was already succeeded by myriads of shining stars, ere we bid adieu to our kind entertainers, and reached, once more, the steamer's deck. Here we sat for hours watching the sombre shadows of the mountains on the bosom of the lonely little bay, with here and there a noiseless canoe haunting the gloom, like a restless spirit of the ocean, or gliding with sudden velocity into the bright starlight—the stillness of night broken only by the murmur of the land breeze, or the low ripple of the waves under our counter.

Early next morning, having obtained all our supplies, we took our departure for Panama, which being now only 1,500 miles distant, we hoped to make our next port of entry. Passing out of the bay, we noticed a remarkable cut in the mountains towards the north, said to have been made by the original Spanish population, for the purpose of admitting the land breeze more effectually, or, perhaps, for the construction of a new road to the city.

The city of Mexico lies only about two hundred and eighty miles to the north of Acapulco; but the mountains are

* Como no, *why not;* quien sabe, *who knows;* favorite Spanish exclamations when puzzled for a reply, or not caring to give one.

higher and the route more difficult than the one from San Blas. Acapulco will, however, become an excellent depôt of supplies for our Pacific steamers, and may occupy in the future a more important position than in the past century, when the richly-laden galleons of Lima and Manilla annually entered the port—its waters affording ample depth and capacity for any number of the largest ships, and being susceptible of the most complete defence.

As we again entered the main channel, bound out to sea at the rate of ten miles an hour, we descried a little canoe following us in the distance, with one of its occupants furiously waving a handkerchief. This proved to be a man engaged as cook, who had all his luggage on board, had received an advance of wages, and was most anxious to accompany us; but he had tarried too long with his wife and babies, so our skipper was inexorable, and the poor fellow was left to realize that a stern chase is a long one, for he followed us clear out of the bay ere he returned to meet the jeers of his companions, and perhaps get his ears boxed in the bargain.

The afternoon of that day we spoke a brig, eighty-one days from Valparaiso, bound to San Francisco, full of Chilians, who had been forty days on allowance of water. We sent a boat with an ample supply of the needed beverage, and received, in return, from her grateful captain, a dozen of good champaigne and sundry hams, on which we toasted and feasted, and kept a bright look-out for more vessels short of water.

We can conceive of no calamity at sea more to be dreaded than this. Surrounded by the interminable briny flood, with the noise of waters perpetually ringing in the ears, the parched throat becomes an open sepulchre, and the swollen tongue, that potent member, refuses its offices of cursing or

of prayer. May we never meet with such a calamity, but as, in the present instance, to relieve it.

We were now off the gulf of Tehuantepec, and saw on three successive evenings the most magnificent sunset ever beheld by our oldest travellers. The arched and massive clouds seemed to form a grand temple, with the immense fiery orb flaming between the columns, and bathing ocean and sky in glory.

The fourth day out from Acapulco, we found that we had a short supply of coals, and in order to husband our resources as much as possible, ceased steaming and put the ship under all sail; and for two days, with a light wind, had an opportunity of judging how helpless is a steamer depending on sails in the Pacific. The distance thus made was, nevertheless, of great importance before encountering the dead calms off the bay of Panama.

One day at noon, when in this listless state, devoid of amusement as of progress, while sitting near the wheel, we overheard a whisper of "half-past one" from the relieving sailor, to the one whose watch on deck had expired. The man also put some questions as to the agent on board (who was in charge of a large amount of gold dust), and other matters which excited his curiosity. With so many passengers and in a steamer too, a mutiny seemed preposterous; so we concluded there was only an agreement between the men for a glass of grog, and gave the matter no further thought. In the evening, however, walking on deck with a lady, our attention was attracted by two of the crew skulking into the officers' cabins, who strangely enough proved to be the same we have alluded to. The subject was then privately mentioned to the captain, to be named by him, as we supposed, to the proper officers of the watch. But it was soon spread

among the passengers, including the ladies. Fear, apprehension, and cautiousness, combined to decide that a mutiny was not impossible, considering the amount of gold known by all to be on board, and our proximity to the coast of Central America, where a landing in the boats could easily be effected. A most ludicrous scene now ensued; watches were appointed fore and aft, lights hung in the gangway, and full-grown men, including "men of might" by profession, were soon parading different parts of the deck, armed with pistols, cutlasses, and rusty muskets. A watch below was also provided, for the special protection of the fair. John, the waiter, was poked in the ribs to rouse out and produce *the gong*, to be used as an alarum; and *roast turkey* was unanimously agreed on as the password.

Our valiant guards included gentlemen of the quarter-deck, horse, foot, and dragoons. Indian fighters, lieutenants, colonels, brevet generals, and even surgeons, whose duty consists in staunching the blood of the wounded, now became fighting warriors, anxious to open the veins of any unlucky prowler under the shade of the bulwarks. Meantime, the frightened sailors, alarmed at the prospect of a fight between the cabin and steerage passengers, as they reasonably enough inferred, hesitated to relieve watch. Eight bells struck; Mr. Trussell, the first officer going on duty, was gruffly seized by the arm, with "*Who goes there?*" but luckily for the offender, laughter overcame that officer's pugnacity. The brave old sailing master, long used to the shout of "*There she blows!*" passed the guard with the greatest hazard, to look after the more dreaded *thirty inches steam*.

The middle watch was far spent; comparative stillness reigned throughout the ship, when awful screams rolled along the deck, and burst upon the horror-stricken ear. The

tramp of many feet, the clash of arms, the groans of the wounded, all betokened that the appalling struggle had commenced. Grasping our weapons, and rushing to the conflict, we found the scuppers slippery with blood; for lo! a beef had been killed the day previous, and the squealing porkers were scrambling away in terror from their infuriated pursuers. Hastening with the cologne to the ladies, and lint for the warriors, we assisted in firmly securing a strong cup of coffee, and again turned in to dream of the horrors of what one of our wags denominated his *first battle*. On a following night, one of our guards was found asleep on the cabin stairs, with a cutlass tightly grasped in each hand; and thus terminated one of the most critical contests recorded in marine warfare. The two sailors explained their presence in the officers' cabins satisfactorily to all; and a purse was afterwards made up and presented to the crew, as some amends for our suspicion.

Court-martials were now the order of the day; and a self-constituted tribunal, of members distinguished for their love not only of justice but of champagne and brandy and water, appointed "Oregon" as orderly sergeant, who, mounted with cocked-hat and sword, and with dirty unmentionables clandestinely pinned to his uniform, proceeded to arrest privates, brevet corporals, and acting midshipmen, for trial. These were severally found guilty of sleeping on their posts, and other derelictions of duty during the war, and fined sundry bottles of brandy and wine, proportioned to the heinousness of their offences—all of which were duly produced and demolished, in the midst of the piping times of peace. Thus the tedium of the voyage was relieved, until we hove in sight of the beautiful and luxuriant-looking coast of Central America.

We were now off the port of Realejo, and although we did not visit it, yet its connection with the Nicaragua route to the Pacific, induced me to obtain what information I could concerning it from commanders of coasting vessels, who had often entered there. The town is situated some four or five miles from the ocean, on an inlet, or small river. Off the mouth of this lies the Island of Castañon, having rocky shoals on its southern side, but a bold shore on the north; where, between it and the main, there is a safe entrance for vessels from the northwest, avoiding the strong currents next the island. Here, and quite up to the town of Realejo, there are not less than four fathoms water in the main channel. The town of Chinendega lies two leagues in the interior, and the beautiful town of San Leon some forty miles from Realejo. Combined with the safety of this harbor, the fine navigation of the San Juan River and Lake Nicaragua, and the abundant supplies of every kind furnished by the country, there can be no doubt that this will soon become an important route of communication between the two oceans.

We now approached Cape Blanco, which, with the fine coast of Veragua, was soon in sight. This is one of the richest provinces of New Grenada, and is a very beautiful country, inhabited chiefly by the aborigines, who are a people of great amiability and simplicity.

Their principal town is called David, on the river of David, some twenty miles from its mouth; and here men, women, and children go every day in troupes to bathe in the pellucid waters. Fruits and vegetables are produced in great profusion, and with these, and hides and cocoa wood, they carry on a little coasting trade with vessels, and frequently navigate their frail canoes a distance of three hundred miles along the coast of Panama.

Near San José, and not far from the town of David, Morazan, the patriot of Central America, was captured and shot, in 1842, by political bandits and murderers.

Off this coast we came in sight of the large island of Coibo, where there is a good harbor and plenty of timber, and which some capitalists endeavored unsuccessfully to obtain a few years ago, as a location for a dockyard for the English government.

Doubling Punta Mala, we now entered the great bay of Panama, and passed close to a lovely little island, resembling, as an old cruiser informed us, the picturesque islands of the China seas.

We were now consuming the last of our coals, and had yet some ninety miles to run; or failing in this, to drift about in the dead calms of this immense bay, for an indefinite number of days. Eagerly, therefore, we watched for the first islands, and at 4 p. m., hove in sight of Banna and Otoque, pointing their welcome mountain tops to the sky.

All the steerage bunks, the orlop deck, and deck between the wheel-houses, studdin' sail spars, doors, ladders, buckets, and cigar boxes had fed the devouring fires, and even the ladies were preparing to part with their well-seasoned corset boards, when, fortunately, Taboga reared its frowning height close on the larboard bow, and we let go our anchor in fifteen fathoms, on the night of the 22d of May; thus, happily, terminating our voyage of 3,700 miles, just as the last sparks flickered from the exhausted furnaces.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Isthmus in the Rainy Season—The Cruces Road and Town of Cruces—A Night and Day in Chagres—Embarcation for Carthagena—Comforts of a British Steamer—Bay and City of Carthagena—Afternoon Ashore—Incidents—Departure and Arrival in Jamaica.

PROCURING a supply of coal from Taboga, we arrived at the anchorage abreast of the city of Panama on the following day. Here was the little British steamer "New Grenada," from Callao, and our old friend the "Oregon," full of passengers bound to El Eorado. We went on board of her and found nearly three hundred passengers, most of whom had been detained a long time on the Isthmus, and who seemed somewhat enervated by the tropical climate.

Among these, to my great surprise, I found an acquaintance who was a fellow passenger in the "Crescent City" in February, and had waited all the intervening time for a passage in the Pacific steamer. He nevertheless reached San Francisco, as I afterwards learned, some days before two sailing vessels, which had left Panama at the time of my departure in the "Oregon," in the month of March.

This day, and the day previous, the rain had poured down during the afternoons in absolute floods, and we had, therefore, sufficient notice that the rainy season had set in. We accordingly availed ourselves of the morning hour to go on shore,

and effected our landing on the rocks in front of the city, by riding over the heads of our fellow creatures. The tide was very low, and the boats could not reach the shore, so the dark and yellow natives came wading out in high glee, especially to get the ladies. Mounted thus on bare, black or yellow shoulders, and clinging with all our might and main to horse hair or wool as the case might be, we were carried ashore, amidst the funny exclamations of the ladies, the ludicrous "cuidado, cuidado,"* of our staggering ponies and our own laughter. We recollected our school-boy rides in a similar way, and the ruling propensity to throw the rider. The natives, however, are accustomed to the water, being mostly fishermen, and indeed, "Panama" is said to be an Indian name signifying *much fish*, doubtless in allusion to the wonderful piscatory treasures of the bay.

The town was now in a dirty and comfortless condition, the air was hot and sultry, and when not raining the steam rose from the reeking streets in clouds of vapor. I remained there four days, completing my visits to places of interest which were described in the beginning of this narrative; and early on the morning of the 28th of May, started for Cruces, mounted on a fine mule, which I obtained through my kind friend Señor Forns of the Señora Fermina Ximenes.

I was also so fortunate as to be accompanied by my highly-esteemed friend Señor Don José Antonio Paredes, who was setting out on a visit to the United States. I trust there is no violation of propriety in acknowledging here my high appreciation of his kind attentions, both on the present occasion and on my first trip across the Isthmus Of one of the most distinguished families of New Grenada; occupying the responsible post of British Mail Agent for a considerable

* Take care, take care.

period, I hope that when he resumes business in Panama he may enjoy the entire confidence of all Americans.

Thus in pleasant converse, and with a bright, clear morning to usher us forth, we passed again through the Gorgona gate, took a parting view of the waters of the blue Pacific, and were soon on the Cruces Road on "our way across the mountain, ho," filled, at least, with pleasant recollections if not agreeable anticipations. The much-dreaded Cruces Road we found disagreeable enough, but with a good mule, by no means dangerous, although doubtless somewhat fatiguing, especially for ladies. After fairly entering the mountains, much of the road is a deep ravine, often thirty feet high on each side, cut or worn through soft volcanic rocks on black sand clay, just wide enough for the passage of a single mule, or sometimes two abreast. This mule path consists of large round cobble stones in loose confusion, or smooth volcanic rock; constantly ascending and descending precipitately, with the torrents of the rainy season pouring along it. Down these the careful mule slides on his fore feet, or climbs them by planting his feet in the deep holes, which, though covered with water, he seems to remember or know by instinct; while overhead the traveller may see an immense mass of green foliage, with here and there a prostrate and decayed tree hanging on the edge of the ravine, ready at any moment to fall on his head or take its place in the path, as fate may decree. From these romantic and dark ravines, he often emerges into a deep swamp of black mud; where several delightful paths present themselves to his choice, filled with trailing vines and decayed vegetation, the odor of which reminds one of Potter's Field at midnight in August.

Midway on our journey, we halted at the side of a considerable rivulet winding through an opening in the mountains,

and seated on the sand or the rocks, partook of a general picnic dinner, in company with several ladies and others who were journeying with us. The water was no longer clear and pure as in the dry season, but swollen with the rains, and so highly impregnated with decayed vegetation, as to be almost of a milk white color. These mountain streams are so numerous and serpentine in their course, as to make it impossible to decide from mere observation, which of them are the head waters or lateral streams of the Rio Grande, flowing into the Pacific, or of the Chagres, emptying into the Atlantic.

Near this spot we passed a collection of native huts, where, as at other points along this road, travellers who are belated or over-fatigued, may pass the night, provided they can put up with dirty hammocks, centipedes, scorpions, fleas and smaller vermin in abundance. I may, however, here mention that the centipedes and scorpions are generally harmless, and rarely seen except in the old bamboo and palmetto houses, or in those which have been deserted and closed. We had much more cause for vigilance in avoiding the domestic plagues.

At 5 P. M. we arrived at the village of Cruces, having made the whole distance of twenty-two miles in nine hours. Some of our fellow travellers, not so well mounted, were three hours longer on the road, and some of the ladies came in well-nigh exhausted, one having had a fall into a deep mud pond.

The village, or town, of Cruces consists of some two hundred houses or wretched huts, situated on the flat, sloping bank, at a bend of the Chagres River, and the head of navigation. The streets are thinly paved with cobble stones, and drier than those of Gorgona; which, though much more elevated and pleasant in location, is a complete mud-hole during the rains. Cruces can also boast a dilapidated old church; and standing near it at the hour of vespers, we saw a native

pound away with a stone on three cracked bells, which hung on a rude gallows erected in front of the building.

Following the example of a group of our native and Spanish friends around us, we doffed our *sombreros*, and while all conversation and employment were suspended, and the impressive silence was broken only by the low murmuring of the lips in prayer, "the twilight dews were falling fast" and the sombre curtain of night closed over the scene.

Through the influence of my friend, Don José, I obtained a good bed for the night, and also on the following morning a comfortable canoe to descend the river. Canoes were in great demand, as besides some fifty or sixty Americans, the bullion and specie for the British steamer, amounting to some two or three millions of dollars value, were to be forwarded the same day. The natives, therefore, were in high glee, demanding and obtaining of our impatient countrymen most exorbitant prices, as evidence of which they only required from us about one-fourth the amount.

Eleven hours were consumed in our passage to Chagres, during three of which the rain poured down in torrents; but we managed to keep nearly dry under our oil cloth bungo, and could not complain, as we fortunately escaped a similar visitation on our journey to Cruces. The river was much swollen, and the exhausted canoe-men were dying, in considerable numbers, of dysentery and cholera. The latter disease they especially dreaded, and when deaths occurred by it, they made night hideous by their howlings in the villages.

The roar of the Atlantic surf as we approached Chagres, was music to our ears; and we finally reached the house of Señor Don Luis Paredes, captain of the port of Chagres, and brother to my friend Don José.

Here we were received with great politeness, and furnished

with a bed in the Custom-house. I remained in the town till afternoon of the next day, seeing no cause for the dread of sickness, which had filled the steamboat Orus with an uncomfortable crowd. Upon going on board of her and seeing the state of things there, I resolved to remain on shore at the little hamlet recently constructed by Americans opposite to Chagres.

Soon after, however, we received an intimation that the American steamers could not be expected for several days, and I accordingly joined some fifteen fellow passengers, and embarked in the Royal Mail Steam Packet Tay, Lieut. Chapman, R. N., for Carthagena and Jamaica. Here we found the most complete arrangements, order and discipline, with every comfort and convenience that we could desire. Among her passengers were several English West Indians, and others, who had ascended the Chagres on their way to Panama, and some to California, but learning the nature of the trip, concluded to return.

And here we must do our friends of our brave and generous old fatherland the justice to declare the opinion, that in the quiet deportment and unobtrusive kindness of *established* social and domestic intercourse, they are quite superior to the headlong temperament of their impulsive and ambitious descendants.

Crossing the Gulf of Darien, we enjoyed once more the steady trade-winds of the Caribbean Sea, glad to exchange for this the sultry atmosphere of Chagres.

At noon, on the 1st day of June, we came in sight of the beautiful islands that enclose the harbor of Carthagena, and entered the *Boca chica*, or smallest channel. Substantial white stone water batteries command the entrance from either side, and in the principal one the bright flag of New Grenada

was gaily waving to the breeze. Inside of these batteries, the narrow channel passing the chain of picturesque isles covered with fine verdure, debouches into a broad, semicircular bay, enclosed with bold mountains of varied outline; at the base of which another battery commands the harbor; while at the summit of one of these peaks, a fortified castle threatens the interior approaches with its plunging fire. Still in line with this and more elevated, the gloomy walls of an extensive convent frown over the dizzy precipices, or look in lonely grandeur toward the quaint old city, which displays its tiled roofs and cathedral towers at the terminus of this mountain range and northern end of the bay. After receiving the official visit of the captain of the port, we were permitted to go on shore.

Landing on a spacious stone mole, we passed into the city through a large stone gateway, with the offices of the customs on each side. With a population of twelve to fifteen thousand inhabitants, Carthagena resembles other Spanish cities in general features. The streets are more numerous and extensive than those of Panama, and the houses more substantial, but not equal in appearance to those of Mazatlan. We saw, nevertheless, indications of some improvement and progress, which only require the fostering influence of political tranquillity for their further development.

But here is the bane of South American republics, that the minority will not submit to the will of the majority. In course of the frequent conflicts arising out of this fatal departure from the life of the republican principle, Carthagena has been the scene of repeated strife. The convent, on the mountain, on one of these occasions, was turned into a fortress by the transportation of cannon up to its walls, and the *boca grande*, or main entrance to the harbor, is completely ob-

structed and closed by sunken vessels and similar impediments. When a people manifest such energy in destructive warfare, what might they accomplish in the steady and vigorous pursuit of the arts of peace!

Rambling through the principal streets, we visited an immense variety of shops filled with gay merchandise and eager tradesmen. In one of these we were accosted by two young lads, who volunteered as our *ciceroni*, and we were soon among the lions. Listening awhile to the notes of piano, flute and guitar, which flowed in rich melody from the balcony of a wealthy *don*, we wandered to the principal *café*, where we found a large, commodious building, having a reading room and extensive bar, furnished with a modern display of wines, mingled with the more wholesome and luscious fruits of the country. A court-yard occupied the centre of the establishment, around which the sleeping apartments were arranged with balconies, thus securing a good circulation of air.

From thence our friendly *muchachos* conducted us to the shops of different jewellers, whom we found working in fine gold, with anvil and hammer, quite "after the manner of the ancients." They, nevertheless, managed to produce some very pretty ornaments, set generally with pearls or fine cornelians. Among the *señoritas* of the city, we saw some fine specimens of the dark and flashing beauty of the daughters of Spain; but admired more the chesnut hair and blue eyes of one who singularly enough approximated to our own Saxon standard of conquest.

As the hour of embarkation was at hand, we now hurried to the market, and found abundant amusement among its chattering groups of *muchachos*, *hombres*, paroquets, and marmosets. The latter are a curious little species of the monkey

tribe, abounding in the South American forests, and are easily caught and tamed.

Having remained in the city longer than my fellow passengers, I now obtained a small canoe, barely large enough to contain two men, and assuming the office of coxwain while our *hombre* managed the sail, we glided across the bay with the light spray foaming over the bows, and the white coral groves flashing under the keel of our fairy skiff.

Alongside the steamer were, as usual, a host of canoes, and we obtained among them some fine specimens of coral and shells, as a memento of our delightful visit to Carthagena. Sailing again late in the afternoon, we had continued fine weather, and arrived at the Island of Jamaica early on the morning of the 4th of June.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Port Royal—Kingston Harbor—A Sunken City—Awful Effects of an Earthquake—Kingston—Population—Climate—Ride to Camp Park—Black Soldiers—Jamaica Mountains—Santa Anna's Family—Visit to his House—Jamaica Railway—Imposition—Plantations—Spanish Town—State of the Island—Voyage Home—Conclusion.

UNDER the nominal direction of a negro pilot, swelling with importance and of no use, we approached Kingston harbor. At the termination of a narrow peninsula extending parallel with the island, are the dock-yard and government buildings of Port Royal, presenting a picturesque and agreeable appearance. Passing close to the low sandy point we entered the harbor, which is a beautiful sheet of water, some five or six miles in length and one or two miles in width, affording entire security for any number of vessels.

This was once the site of Old Port Royal, and we were sailing over the ruins of the destroyed and sunken city, where it is said that the remains of houses may yet be seen under some portions of the bay. This is probably imagination, but whether so or not, history affords sad evidence of the awful effects of the earthquake in this island, on the 7th of June, 1692.

Port Royal, a city of many thousand inhabitants, who were living in a state of depravity unparalleled in modern times,

was instantly overwhelmed and sunk in the sea, very few of the population escaping to witness the wonderful change effected in the face of the whole island.

After that event, the present town of Kingston was built on the north side of the bay. Its situation is low and sandy, and the houses extending over about one square mile of surface are of red brick, intersected with numerous streets, which are very dusty and generally without sidewalks. Although the evidences of its former wealth and consequence are everywhere to be seen, yet it is now old, dilapidated, and miserable, in fact a living ruin.

Taking lodgings at the exceedingly pleasant and comfortable house of Mrs. Edwards, in King street, I enjoyed in a quiet way every kindness and attention, divested of the annoyances and crowd of a boarding house; and shall long remember with pleasure, the agreeable and intelligent acquaintances formed during my residence under her hospitable roof.

The present population of Kingston is about 30,000, and we judged that at least five-sixths of the whole are of the black and colored races. Many of the latter, however, are equal in intelligence and position to the whites, and in appearance not easily distinguished from them. We also saw a few of the Bengal coolies, introduced into the island after the Emancipation Act, by way of experiment. They are of a jet black complexion, with features more Caucasian than African, and are here a set of idle, vicious vagrants.

In our rambles through the town, we found great numbers of shops stocked with every variety of foreign merchandize, and many so filled with the old jewelry or furniture of ruined families, as completely to realize the description of Dickens' Old Curiosity Shop, and to make the place appear like a city

of pawnbrokers. Other streets occupied exclusively by blacks, are formed into regular bazaars by the outdoor display of the oddest possible mixture of everything. One of the most extensive fancy and variety stores we visited was kept by an English shopman, whose pertinacity in recommending his wares was quite abominable, and his suspicion of all who entered was so apparent, that we thought him the business agent of some London burglars. In all other quarters we met with the utmost politeness. Besides these different classes, there remain yet several commercial and importing houses, successfully conducted by English, Scotch and American merchants.

The climate of Kingston is hot but not sultry, and there is generally a sea and land breeze, morning and evening. The interior, however, is far more salubrious, every variety of climate existing among the mountains, from the tropical sun to the English fogs. The houses are well adapted for comfort, having large apartments with bare lignum-vitæ floors and surrounded with wide, pleasant verandahs. They have also large courtyards, lined on each side with little one story buildings, formerly occupied by the household slaves, but now appropriated to various domestic purposes. Surrounding the common or public square are the old military barracks, theatre, Catholic Church, Wesleyan Chapel, which is a new and quite pretty Gothic building, and the Episcopal Cathedral.

The latter I visited on the anniversary of the great earthquake, which has been faithfully commemorated by special religious services ever since its occurrence, a period of more than a century and a half. This is an old brick edifice in the form of a cross, encircled by a high wall of the same material, enclosing innumerable tombs of the plainest descrip-

tion. The walls and floor of the church are quite covered with engraved marble tablets and sculptured monuments, which relate the honored or sad story of many a family now extinct or desolate; among these is one to Admiral Benbow.

Accepting the polite invitation of some American friends, I availed myself of a seat in their carriage, and enjoyed some delightful rides into the country. Crossing the square on a fine afternoon, we passed in several streets some elegant houses surrounded with beautiful gardens, filled with flowers and vines, or fine old trees. These are also to be seen in clusters in the country, and are quaintly denominated *pens* by their occupants, who are generally of the most respectable classes.

Journeying in groups towards the town, we met market men and women of every shade and aspect, but mostly blacks. The women carry every kind of burden *on their heads*, from an empty bottle to an enormous basket of fruit or vegetables; and as this is accomplished without the use of their arms or hands, they have in consequence a remarkably erect and graceful carriage.

Intermingled with these came squads of black soldiers, off duty, clad in the red-coat fatigue dress of the "Britishers." Most of them were tall, brawny-looking fellows, and with their dandy canes cut quite a dash, barring their *shin de heela* extremities.

Arriving at the park, we were delighted with the surrounding scenery. In the distant foreground lay the town with the bay and ocean spread before it, while close at hand, toward the north, rose the high Jamaica mountains, covered with coffee plantations and misty clouds, and attaining, in some portions of the island, an altitude of 7,000 feet. Within the

park are extensive barracks for officers and men, with an arsenal, and residence for the colonel commanding.

Near the latter, arranged on the green around a large circular stand, the negro bands of the regiments, composed of some fifty performers, were discoursing most delicious music.

In close proximity were the carriages of the General of the Forces, of the Bishop of Jamaica, and others filled with charmed and charming listeners; and last, but not least, the dashing carriage and equipage of Santa Anna, occupied by his young wife and daughter.

Finding ourselves rather lionized as wonders of California, we thought it but fair to view the lions in return; and in leaving the ground, ordered the coachman to pass in front of the carriage of the Mexican ladies. The blundering or insolent fellow, however, to our infinite mortification, and the annoyance of the fair lionesses, stopped right in front of their carriage. Venturing, therefore, only a single glance of admiration, we drove off in rage, determined to seek an opportunity for explanation and apology.

Accordingly, on a subsequent day, we called at the residence of his Excellency, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, which is about half a mile without the town. The house is a large octagonal, gloomy, old brick building, surrounded by cactus or chaparal hedges. Driving up the broad carriage-way, we were met at the door by an old negro porter, who spoke both English and Spanish. A servant in the entry received our cards, and ushered us into the unfurnished marble-floored hall. Here we were quickly waited upon by the Secretary of his Excellency, who informed us of the "assurances of his distinguished consideration," but that he had a swelled face, and would see us "day after to-mor-

row." As we knew that he lived very retired, and had met with a recent misfortune in the absconding of his private secretary with several thousand pounds, we determined not to repeat our visit. Aware, however, of his professed hatred to Americans, who have annihilated his military reputation with his countrymen, we desired his secretary to inform him that we were on our way home from California with specimens of its inexhaustible gold.

It is difficult to imagine what may be the future career of this extraordinary man; but as his influence is as great as ever in the western Mexican States, and those bordering on the Pacific, where the power of the Americans was not extensively manifested, it is probable that as soon as the money stipulated in our late treaty is paid and exhausted, he will again, aided by his immense resources and address, become President of Mexico.

Having satisfied our curiosity in relation to Kingston and its neighborhood, we sallied forth one afternoon towards the Jamacia Railway Station, and were saluted on all sides as usual by the demand, "Massa buccra ride? Massa California buccra take a carriage?" but dogmatically sticking our toes in the sand, we sturdily resisted all importunities, and outwalking the black feet, soon reached the station.

Presenting a quarter eagle at the ticket office, it was refused, with the announcement that American coin was not received. Not disputing the right of the company to its own regulations, I merely reminded the clerk that American gold was at a premium of five per cent. more than sovereigns in Kingston, and requested him to receive the coin as a favor, as the train would depart in two or three minutes, and I had not the time to effect an exchange. Stepping into an adjoining office, he returned with permission of one of the

managers to receive it at two dollars, or twenty per cent. less than its actual value in Kingston, and I was obliged to submit to this petty and contemptible imposition, or lose my passage by that train. On my return, however, at the other station, the clerk there received a similar coin at its par value, not having his instructions from Shylock on the subject.

Stepping into the second class of three small carriages, we were whirled at tolerable speed over a tolerable road, through dry swamps, filled with scrub underwood, with an occasional fine grove of Mango trees in full bearing.

Here and there was the house of a small planter or grass grower, with a flock of sheep, or other of the woolly tribes, lazily working in the fields, or permitting the rays of the sun to warm them to repose. At one point on the road, we enjoyed an exquisite view of Port Royal and Kingston harbor, with its white sails bending to the breeze, and the grim old man-of-war receiving-ship, in stern repose anchored in the midst.

We also crossed one of the pretty little streams which abound in the island, and are called rivers, but filled to the brim with the pure element, it resembled more an artificial canal for irrigation. On some of these, boats and scows are used to float the sugar, rum, and coffee of the more distant plantations to market. Though there was a great drought in this portion of the island, yet we could see the rain pouring down on the mountains and distant parishes.

Of the names of the latter, we remember "St. Ann's" and "St. Thomas in the Vale," said to present most beautiful scenery, with the finest plantations of pimento, coffee, and sugar. Two sugar plantations called "St. John's" and the "Golden Grove," are especially famous. These we were

anxious to visit, but, much to our regret, circumstances would not permit.

After a ride of thirteen miles, we arrived at the fine brick station, or depôt, as we call it in our Frenchified affectation. Both the station houses of this road are substantial brick buildings, superior to many in our own country. Spanish Town or St. Jago de la Vega is the capital of Jamaica, and we found it a dull and dreary town, with few inhabitants, and much like a corner of Kingston. It is situated in a pretty valley on a small river, which in some portion of its course runs under ground. The courts and assembly were not in session, but under the polite guidance of a young Scotch gentleman who accompanied me from Kingston, I visited the assembly buildings, library and law courts, and saw the government house and offices. These are plain, substantial old buildings, surrounding a pretty little park filled with fruits and flowers.

Influenced by an American lack of veneration for great men, as well as by lack of dress coat and white kid gloves, I omitted to present a deer skin California phiz to his excellency the governor, though assured of a polite reception. In our rambles through the town we saw and heard enough to convince us, that the love of pettifogging and the worrying of legal terriers prevailed there to quite as great an extent as in *enlightened* communities generally.

Taking up our abode for the night, in the large and comfortable mansion of Miss Marshall, a most kind and excellent lady from the land o'cakes, we returned next morning to Kingston to prepare for departure.

Delighted with the genial climate, beauty, and fertility of Jamaica, we could not avoid a feeling of regret for its neglected and unprosperous condition. The Emancipation Act,

and competition of slave-grown sugar in the home market, are generally denounced as the chief causes of the decline of this once most flourishing colony of England. But, although this decline was unquestionably hastened thereby, its foundation was long before laid in the extensive system of absenteeism of the landed proprietors, and the consequent entrusting of their estates to the entire management of incompetent or unfaithful agents, who too often thrived on the wreck of the properties not already rendered complete wastes by their own negligence, or absorbed by the factorage, commissions and interest—the result of the folly and extravagance of the lordly, but, at last, poverty-stricken owners.

Governed by England during almost two centuries, compare the present state and condition of Jamaica with that of the wealthy and prosperous State of Massachusetts, settled only about a quarter of a century before Jamaica fell into the hands of the English, and possessed of nearly the same extent of territory, with a far inferior soil and climate. This wonderful contrast, we believe, has resulted *primarily* and *comprehensively* from the effects of two centuries of monarchical government in the one, and of three quarters of a century of free government in the other.

The salary of the Governor of Massachusetts is twenty-five hundred dollars per annum, or about £500, while the Governor of Jamaica receives £6,000, or twelve times as much as the former, being equal to £1,000 more than the salary of the President of the United States. If other expenditures are in equal proportion, what then is the difference in taxation? The grand source of the evils under which Jamaica is bowed down, is, therefore, to be traced to the whole fabric of government.

Slavery or freedom have comparatively little to do with

the question; for, aside from the moral aspect of these, certain it is that slave-labor would be as utterly inapplicable in Massachusetts, as useful and valuable in Jamaica.

Could our system of *free* and *cheap* government, combined with the energy and enterprise of our national character, be introduced into the whole of the West India Islands, an island-republic might, in time, outvie the greatness of the island-empire of Britain, or equal that of the great Republic; or, on the other hand, should the ambitious yearnings of the Southern States, in relation to Cuba, ever be gratified, the problem of slavery may yet be worked out by its own advocates, in the future transfer of their *entire property* and *system* to that tropical Paradise.

Quite, content, however, with our temperate clime, we bade adieu to our kind friends in Jamaica, and sailed on Sunday morning, the 10th of June, in the brig "Ida," Capt. Charles Foulke, of and for Philadelphia.

We had scarcely got rid of our pilot, ere the shout of "*a man overboard!*" thrilled every heart. In a moment we saw our first mate, an old sailor, pop his head, straw hat and all, above the waves, swimming manfully, as cool as Old Ocean itself. He was, probably, too tough, as well as "ancient and fish-like," to be molested by the sharks, so he was hauled on board.

After a prosperous voyage, during which we enjoyed the pit-a-pat of the try-sail boom in more than one calm, gloated over a slain shark, exulted in the indescribable beauties of a dying dolphin, and turned up our noses at the lamp-oil of a dead whale alongside a Yankee schooner, we arrived, June 26th, at the beautiful old city of brotherly love, in sixteen days, one-sixth of which time was consumed in ascending the Delaware River by wind and tide.

Now, kind reader, after journeying together some twelve thousand miles, we will take the liberty to bequeath to you three parting hints. First, if you ever go to sea in the tropics, sleep in the long-boat if you can obtain that privilege; second, if you think we have not shown you enough of the *elephant*, but got on the wrong way, and slid off backwards, please to mount him and take a view for yourself; and third, if your patience with us is not quite exhausted it is time it was, for we have reached

THE END.